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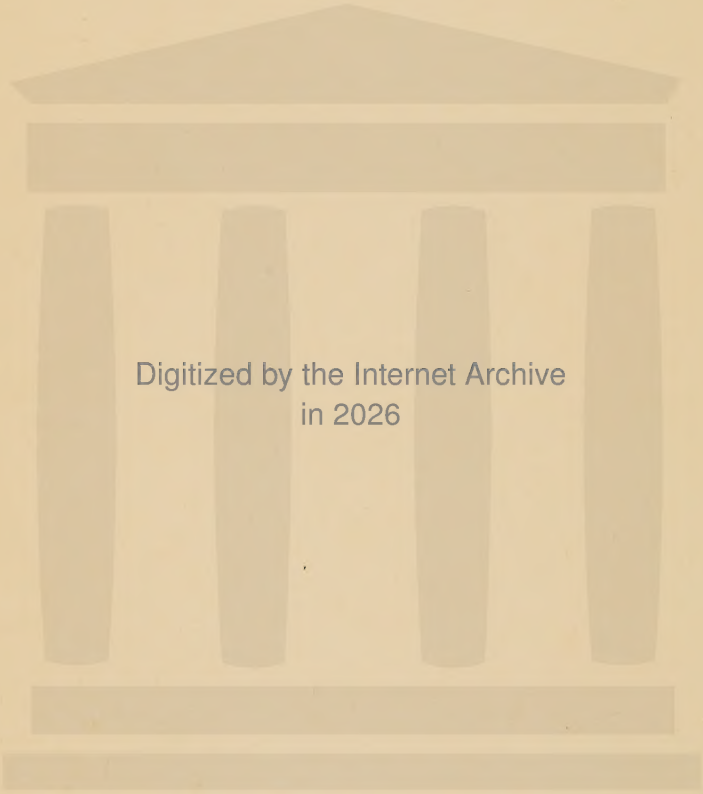
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Perspectives USA *is published quarterly in October, January, April, and July at 1 Lefferts Avenue, Brooklyn 25, New York. Published by Intercultural Publications Inc.*
Entered as second-class matter, January 30, 1953, at the Post Office at Brooklyn, New York under the Act of March 3, 1879.
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The American edition of Perspectives USA *is published quarterly by Intercultural Publications Inc., 2 West 46th Street, New York 36, New York. Single copies; $1.50. Annual subscription: $5.00. Orders for subscriptions should be addressed to Paragon Mailing Service Inc., 1 Lefferts Avenue, Brooklyn 25, New York. Distribution to bookstores is handled by The Viking Press, 18 East 48th Street, New York 17, New York, and distribution to newsstands by Selected Outlets, P.O. Box 761, Hoboken, New Jersey.*

Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Editor for this issue: Irwin Edman.

Cover by Rudolph de Harak.
Typographic design by Alvin Lustig.

Publisher: James Laughlin.
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Lithographed by the General Offset Company, New York.
Art sections engraved and printed by Brüder Rosenbaum, Vienna.

Perspectives USA *is published also in British, French, German and Italian editions. A list of distributors in every country appears on page 166.*

To the reader:

The publication of *Perspectives USA* has been made possible through a grant from The Ford Foundation. As part of its broad program dedicated to the support of activities promising significant contributions to world peace, to the advancement of the economic well-being of people everywhere, and to the improvement of educational facilities, The Ford Foundation has in *Perspectives USA* undertaken to further friendship and understanding among peoples of all countries through cultural exchange.

As a counterpart to the publication in *Perspectives USA* of the thought, letters, and art of the United States, Intercultural Publications has launched a reciprocal program which brings to readers in the United States the best of contemporary creative writing and art of many countries throughout the world. This program is being carried out through a series of special supplements published in the American magazine *The Atlantic Monthly*. The first two such supplements, *Perspective of India* (October 1953), and *Perspective of Holland and Belgium* (April 1954), will be followed by similar supplements on Japan, and on other countries to be announced.

Perspectives USA is a magazine cast in the form of a series of anthologies. Each number is edited by a different guest editor. This method of selecting contents for the review is designed to insure adequate representation for the great diversity of cultural trends in America today.

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Established by The Ford Foundation

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Europe is always discovering America, and Asia, with mixed emotions, is discovering it too. As Mr. Peter Quennell shows in this number of *Perspectives*, the almost complete stranger to our shores hits undeniable aspects of the truth. Impressions of visitors to this multifarious land are published all over the world; they are often oddly and essentially accurate despite the haste with which their generalizations are made and despite the inevitable distortions of the transient observer. Speculations are printed by someone who has never visited America at all and who founds his version upon aspects gleaned from novels and biographies. Europe and Asia often discover highly abstract Americas, in which their own fears and hopes for the future are projected on this Republic which is so arresting to the rest of the world and to itself, by its power, its resources, and its complex ingenuities.

Then too, America is always discovering itself, and of late our articulate intellectuals have been rediscovering us with a vengeance. They have found America to be the mirror of some pet theory of a lonely crowd, a vanishing middle class, a managerial revolution, a lost frontier, a new leisure class, a new common man. The recent

growth and popularity of American studies would lead a foreigner to suspect that Americans thought their civilization had begun yesterday, or that they considered their patterns of thought and feeling to be outlandishly different from those in any other country. Any journal attempting seriously and honestly to express what is being said and thought in the United States inevitably and naturally discloses its geographical origins. The accent is special, as is the American accent in the English language. The perspective is somewhat special too, though as a reading of this issue of *Perspectives* will show, perhaps not as special as a foreigner might be, and indeed has often been, prepared to believe. Idioms, concerns, interests, vary inevitably in different parts of the world. But there is a republic of letters and art, as well as a Republic of the United States. Writers and thinkers and artists in this country are members of that commonwealth, and their patrimony is in no small measure that of educated men, whether in Persia or Peru.

There have always been Americans, not least in the nineteenth century, who revealed themselves to be, as Mr. Steegmuller puts it in his article on the Jarves collection at Yale, "subtle, susceptible . . . with a poignant sense of the past and a long view of the future." The acute awareness of the past has long been a feature of America, as of every other culture. There were scholars in the nineteenth century who felt it their mission to introduce their fellow Americans to the great heritage of art and letters and thought of the East and West. One need but cite the labors of Charles Eliot Norton, who tried at Harvard to make young American students citizens of the world in literature and art, and George Herbert Palmer, whose mission it was to make Americans, through translation (his own), at one with Homer.

But as Mr. Steegmuller reminds us, subtle and sensitive Americans had a long view of the future, too, and perhaps increasingly a sense that in various ways, not all apparent to first observation, the *future* of the past, its custody at least, lay in America's hands. By that is not meant something as obvious as that there are in America large collections of European paintings and manuscripts, that the Walpole collection is not in England but in Connecticut, that scholars

interested in Elizabethan playwrights make pilgrimages to the Huntington Library in California. It does not refer to the fact that European masterpieces of art were brought to the United States for safekeeping during the war. (Should there be another war it is not certain they would be much safer here.) There are subtler and deeper reasons why Americans feel that the future and the prospects for that civilization which all members of the republic of art and letters share in common lie on the Western side of the Atlantic. America, having a shorter history, seems to be maternity *in excelsis*. Not that there will be no tomorrow elsewhere. But it is becoming ever clearer that what has been called "Americanism" is simply a name for the fact that tendencies current everywhere—industrialization, mass media, rapidity of communication—which had their origin or their first development through initiative and enterprise in the United States, are now world-wide. Whatever the future is, artistically and spiritually, its material conditions and its social context will not be altogether different from those prevailing in the United States. Is this not, indeed, precisely what is feared by a good many foreigners? They see America, as did Georges Duhamel in his *Scènes de la Vie Future*, published a generation ago, as a preview of what life on the planet is bound to be everywhere.

The traveled, or even the informed, American has long felt that the sources of imagination and thought in himself and in American culture in general were in Greece and Egypt and India, in England and France and Germany. All the great dead are our contemporaries, and not Europe only but Asia as well. The American Transcendentalists of a century ago were aware of how much Buddha and the Bhagavad-Gita had to say to us, and how much they spoke in and through us, often without our knowing it. A nation that shared with England the tradition of the Old and New Testaments was not a stranger to Palestine or Greece. Americans are now becoming in a different sense aware of connections with Europe and Asia, partly through the bloody lessons in contemporary history. Wars and invasions have taught us once again that we are part of the planet and, inescapably, members of the human race.

By the same token Europeans and Asiatics have become more

aware of America and, with varying degrees of enthusiasm and reserve, of American culture. Who reads an American book? is no longer a rhetorical or contemptuous or even relevant question. The rise of interest in American studies all over the world is a barometer of the awareness of American civilization. This in a sense is nothing new. Emerson has for a century been a world figure, as have Thoreau and Whitman and Poe. More recent American writing has been sedulously and eagerly read in cultivated circles in Europe. One may say, perhaps, that what has interested Europeans about it has not been simply the attraction of an exotic subject matter, like Cooper's Indians; especially in recent American writings, foreign readers and Americans themselves have been surprised to discover that below the speed, the energies, and the busy materialisms of American life there continue to speak the quiet voices of private experience, the preoccupations identical with those of sensitive minds all over the world.

The predicaments of modern man and the relation of contemporary themes to eternal ones, though very clearly seen in the United States, transcend locality. Thus in this issue Professor Ernest Nagel's reflections on the perspectives of science and the prospects of men raise issues that are no less fundamental and urgent in Paraguay or Pakistan than they are in the United States. It is true that some of the most fruitful investigations and some of the most fundamental reflections on the philosophy of science have occurred in this country, but the subject matter of such inquiries into the nature of science, and the effects of such inquiry on the destiny of man, provide world themes, to which Americans, among others, contribute. The conditions and the apparatus of knowledge generate modes of feeling and thought that transcend time and region.

In the same way Americans, in speaking for themselves and of their private feelings, speak for man as well. Foreign observers have been particularly struck in this last generation by the fact that American writers, living in a society which has a reputation for externality and insensibility, should have so subtly and variously explored and expressed the realm of the personal, the internal, the region of the semi- and the sub-conscious. Names, places, the American vernacular, the American landscape, are not those of the rest of the world. But

readers beyond American shores have found on occasion that writers in Mississippi or Nebraska or Virginia address themselves to eternal human themes, speak up, and speak out of central human awarenesses, and often with exactness, fire, and beauty. The communication of hitherto unexplored and hitherto unexpressed feelings has been one of the things for which American literature in recent years has been particularly esteemed in widely distant parts of the world. Often in an easy generalization it is said that the great triumph of French fiction is psychological. It frequently is. But such a story as William Maxwell's study of the soul of a thirteen-year-old boy, or Katherine Anne Porter's study of the psyche of Cotton Mather as revealed through a careful study of his diary, show that American writers of fiction are not simply sociologists but are psychologists in the subtlest, which is to say the most poetic, form.

Private feelings about matters sometimes private, often public, on occasion cosmic, are, of course, the subject matter of a long tradition in poetry. They are the substance of current American poetry, too. In the exploration of new ways of expression, fresh nuances of perception and feeling, American poets have been adventurous and experimental. The clichés of forms and of emotions have been left behind; contemporaries have found ways native to our age in which to speak of timeless things. These things we share with those writing and thinking in France and in India, in Africa and in Brazil. Ideas may originate in England or Italy, feelings may first be identified in Canada or Iran. An American journal reflects all these, as well as themes and emotions first expressed, perhaps, in America. This issue of *Perspectives* gives one sampling of Americans who are writing what is expressive of themselves, and—as always in writing which is authentic—we find that they are speaking for and of men and women everywhere.

Louis Kronenberger

THE ONE AND THE MANY

Patterns of conformity
in the American character

We were never an artistic people; and we have ceased, on the whole, to be an individualistic one. Conformity is one of the first words applied to us by foreigners; one of the first that, in critical moods, we apply to ourselves. It is rather natural that, coming very late on the scene, America should have accepted the standards and followed the fashions of others; or that when it later began creating standards and fashions of its own, it should have followed up any momentary audacities with a countervailing sense of caution. So long as American life was crude and primitive, there was doubtless enough "bad taste" displayed to create something nationally picturesque; enough indecorum to suggest individuality. While men still ate peas with a knife, danced in mud-splashed boots, went to bed in their underwear, spat like marskmen into cuspidors, and swigged whiskey royally out of the bottle, their very colorfulness set them apart. But theirs was the conduct, after all, of a whole frontier society. It constituted very strict conformity of a kind, so that we may wonder which of these men would have dared, in the company of others, to eat with a fork, or spit into a handkerchief. But of course this type of conformity is not racial or national: in all frontier societies we find

people frightened of putting on airs, or of seeming like milksops or dudes; in matters like these there is much the same ritualism as governs underworld characters or schoolboys; and men are "refined" under pressure from their womenfolk—which usually refines them *en masse*; or after they have moved on to a higher sphere of society.

Paradoxically, the strong American tendency to conform may have been fostered by our very variety of cultural backgrounds. A nation like ours, made up of diverse racial strains, each with its own mores and sanctions, must have found "assimilation" and "conformity" almost exact synonyms. In the cities, Italian or German or Jewish or Irish sections might linger on, or later be grafted on, with a culture and way of life of their own; but in most small communities, with their half-dozen German families, their two or three Scandinavians and Poles and Jews, the dominant tradition—at any rate, among the middle class—imposed itself rapidly. Being "different" soon became a stigma rather than a mere circumstance; and being like every one else, an achievement rather than an absence of one.

It is obvious that the want of a common background, of a common cultural floor, has increased the need in America for broad social likenesses. Had we possessed that common floor, we might have been far more tolerant of all other individual differences. But it is the function of a melting-pot to melt differences down; it is the aim of a "new" country to build traditions up; and for a callow people so constantly on the move, so hungrily on the march, there had to be a sense of agreement about fundamentals.

Perhaps it is because there is so little conservatism of *manner* in America (where we have neither powerful class boundaries nor much natural reserve) that, while displaying energy and initiative, America should yet be conforming to a basic philosophy, a recognized master plan—the gospel of getting ahead. In old and class-dominated societies, the pattern of conformity, the rules for communal living, have been for the most part static. They have been ways of preserving the kind of world one was born into; they were concerned with holding on to something. In America, however, the pattern of conformity is peculiarly dynamic: it consists not in preserving the world

one was born into, but in acquiring and asserting the point of view (often a succession of points of view) of the world one aspires toward. There is conformity to a single idea, but since the idea itself is that of material advancement, one comes to imitate a whole series of attitudes; one grasps, as it were, the etiquette suited to each rung on the ladder, while no rung on the ladder is, ideally, the final goal.

Whether a large number of people scale the entire ladder is immaterial; what is important is the assumption that they will. And of course the very gospel of Getting Ahead imposes a special need for conforming: one almost has to conform because the pace one moves at, and the always new country one is moving through, leave one too insecure and ill-informed to strike out for oneself. The classic Success-Story pattern compels one to vacate a given social milieu just when one may be supposed to have mastered its secrets. The Moving Van is a symbol of more than our restlessness; it is the most conclusive possible evidence of our progress.

Thus, though the whole impulse of American living is to conform, and the whole aspiration is to belong, what one actually conforms to is less any given set of ideas than the gospel of conformity itself; while the essence of "belonging" is to pass *beyond* what one belongs to—to make being established the key to being advanced. American conformity, at bottom, is adaptability, a kind of endless when-in-Rome-ism. Americans, in the course of moving upwards, must again and again wear different clothes, eat different food, belong to different fraternal orders and then country clubs and then city clubs, take on subtly different opinions about marriage and divorce, politics and art, sport and education; they must keep up with fewer and fewer people, but keep up more and more appearances. From having—to take one example—no connection with horses at all, they come first to bet on them, and then to ride them, and then to breed them, and then to ride them taking a salute, and then to ride them mallet in hand. At bottom it is no doubt a case of *plus ça change*; but in everyday ways it is a case of delicate variations in ethics and etiquette. Doubtless there is a point beyond which one is definitely committed to the middle class; and another point, less easily defined, beyond which one is definitely committed to the upper middle class; and

finally one which sets one among the great executives. But part of being somebody in America consists in being about to turn into somebody else; so soon as one doesn't belong to the future, one begins to belong to the past.

There are accordingly no set ethical beliefs, no immutably established values; and all this might have real virtue in it, might have the open-minded, fluid look of progress. But actually, as one moves along, rather than having to conform to less and less, one must conform to more and more. It is enough at the outset to seem alert and ambitious, to show a surface respect for the proprieties; to go to church and be a family man and not get too drunk at the office Christmas party. But though already one's soul may not be quite one's own, one's time outside of office hours is; and though one may lack the means to do most of the things one would like, one is not yet forced to do too many things one doesn't. But in the late stages, at the high social levels, among the top income brackets, one must—in about equal proportion—both follow examples and set them; and since at this level one's slightest movement is news, and hence known, and hence a public act, it must be done with a great care for effect and an equal care for consequences. The outsider or the underling, as they watch the big shot perform, may imagine that his work were better called play; he is rushing about in planes and private cars; is put on committees, awarded degrees, cited, quoted, delegated, appointed, elected; he moves from cocktail party to reception, from testimonial dinner to public banquet, from the Governor's Mansion to the White House, from Washington to London. But it is perhaps more accurate that his play should be called work, if only because it has become indistinguishable from it. Lunch is no pause in the day's occupation, but more likely one of its high points. Dinner is no way of blotting out the day's exertions, but rather a way of crowning them. By now the setting an example has become a sacred obligation; where earlier it was enough to obey the law, now it is required to expound and uphold and at length embody it. We perhaps think of all this as largely restricted to political life, to kissing babies or chopping logs for the photographers. But to maintain the role of a great executive, of a real molder of opinion, one must seem always to

display the Open Mind, to Give Ear to the expert, to "Meet With" the foreigner, to hear what the Other Side has to say. One must be Easy of Access, whether to employees or stockholders or (should they have followings) cranks. And this is to omit all the parleys having to do with business itself. The big shot, at least on an hours-per-day basis, is perhaps the greatest conformist of all, since he must adhere to the rules he lays down: he becomes the great booming clock by which all the others set their watches.

The prevailing formula offers Americans a great deal, as it were, in Navy terms of seeing the world; and, in social terms, of leading a host of lives. A really successful American who started, classically, in a small way in a small town, can look back at the age of sixty on a life very rich in physical activity and even in cultural experience. From an agreeably anonymous provincial boyhood, he will have gone to college, where he will have picked up new traits and ideas; and having gone from college to work, will, in course of becoming an executive, have known big-city life at various levels. He will have known, besides, the suburban life of the commuter, and now, at sixty, will know the seignorial life of the estate owner. He will have dabbled in resorts and clubs, and will have gone—and less and less as a mere tourist—often abroad. Such a man will certainly have great intelligence; and at sixty will certainly not be crude, and may well have great background and taste.

And yet though the pattern is neither rigid nor provincial, though in moving up one moves considerably about, though in the drive for power there is time for many forms of pleasure—for all that, the variety of American-plan success resembles the variety of the American-plan meal. What strikes one first is the amount of variety; what strikes one next is the amount of sameness. American success turns out to be a kind of variations on a single theme; or rather, of variations on a theme by X. The worst aspect isn't that one theme inspires all the variations, but that it is a theme of someone else's making: one can lead any number of lives, dashing and even dazzling; but not one's own. More, I think, than even the luxuriousness, it is the outward variety, the changes in pace and background, that make the success story so enticing for those who live it—and so misleading.

The great corporations don't so much carry their promising employees up a stairway as put them on a kind of spiral sightseeing bus. The white hopes are shifted from department to department, even from continent to continent: from being in charge of sales in Rio they pass to being in charge of personnel in Rome; now they are assistants to the president of their corporation, now they are on loan to the president of their country; it is their job today to sit around and listen, tomorrow to go out and speak. This is a genuinely educative and broadening process; it inculcates, as it all too soon involves, the worldliness and sinuousness of a diplomat; nor does it demand that trait so generally assumed of diplomats, a profound sense of irony.

I have been so far painting a particularly imposing set of murals. I have been treating of the real opinion-molders, the upper two per cent. The picture, even among most very successful Americans, isn't usually quite so spacious; but even in the regions of, say, the upper ten per cent, the variety today is as considerable as the rewards. Where there was once a mere class of executives, there is now a whole race of them. The old bank vice-presidency dodge, which at no extra cost enhanced an employee's value by increasing his self-importance, has doubtless tinged the word *vice-president*, or even *executive*, with something ambiguous. But the fact remains that with the development of so many huge corporations, the breaking them up into so many subsidiaries, the interlocking of divisions and departments, there has grown up a real need for all sorts of executives, whether hirers and firers, okayers and yes-men, surrogates and designates, grand exalted rubber-stampers, masters of the mimeographed memo, advisers to advisers, idea men and what's-the-idea men, licensed barflies and chartered clubmen, greeters, note-takers, decoy ducks, gentlemen of the bedchamber; not to speak, of course, of super salesmen, publicists, company lawyers, and members of the blood royal—all the sons, brothers, nephews, cousins, and sons-in-law. The very fact that so much of American business is conducted in the guise of pleasure, that so many deals are consummated not only pen but highball in hand, that the fifth tee vies with the inner sanctum, the club lounge with the front office, the commuter's train with the customers' room: all this, judging by how you look at it, either confers

social life upon the businessman, or condemns him to it. Bridge, poker, golf, tennis, sailing, fishing, bowling are "accomplishments" as useful as embroidering, japanning and French once were for young ladies. Furthermore, in any age of chain stores, branch offices and international affiliates, even the most modest type of manager can live in all kinds of places: in small city and large, town and suburb; and need be neither a big shot nor a buyer to go abroad.

Reasonably successful people get around much more than they once did: there is even a greater exchange of ideas, and a far greater acquaintance with styles and customs. Your most commonplace junior executive will, likely as not, serve coffee he drank in New Orleans, a cocktail he was introduced to in a ship's bar, a casserole dish he bought in Italy filled with a stew he encountered in France. Such a man is enormously superior to his counterpart of a generation or more ago—partly because he had no exact counterpart. He has, in fact, such new characteristics as to suggest the emergence of a new type; and his greater awareness of other cultures, his being himself (in a small way) the product of cross-cultivation, is what is interesting and often valuable about him. What is not so satisfactory is that he is as much a current type as his predecessor was a type forty years ago. We have advanced—and it marks a real advance—from the sort of street where all the houses are architecturally alike to one where the houses are structurally one, but show a diversity of façades.

The weakness rests on the fact that our budding big shot can find enough variations on the given theme to feel no need for anything truly individual. The best people in this category would be as able to appreciate Babbitt today as were the enlightened minority thirty-odd years ago. Their satirist, who is often equally their spokesman, is Mr. J. P. Marquand. Yet, less gauche, ignorant, provincial as such people are, the difference in the end represents rather a change in strategy than a change in substance. For all the evidence of free will, a fundamental determinism still prevails. It would sometimes seem that this new type was called into existence that it might destroy individualism by making it seem superfluous. For what, after all, can any prospering adherent of this clan deeply long for? On his place in the country, he can have, not just his own swimming pool, but his

own Walden Pond; and to this Thoreauvian hideaway, armed with a shaker of martinis and reading matter after his own heart, he can repair for a few hours every week end. He can commune there with Nature, or reflect upon mankind, or simply fall asleep: but at any rate return refreshed. His country place, again, can have any Recognized Architectural Look; no food can seem too exotic or peasant-like; though (since he is a man of sense) his drinks will be on the conservative side. And in choice of guests, as of food, he can be, within reason, quite unorthodox. He and his kind have pretty generally rejected stuffiness; and, if he has any dash about him, or sense of the occasion, or gift for launching things a little sassily, there is no social experiment that need seem too bold—a cocktail party in the morning, a tennis tournament at night. His home is indeed his castle; and very possibly a castle inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Who could want more? Who could live less in the shadow of a drab Puritanism, submit less to the decrees of an oppressive Philistia? In his world, such diversions as ballet or classical music are no longer thought longhaired, any more than a variety of social reforms are thought Red. Social conformity in the old sense hardly so much as exists. Fences are still up; taboos still operate; fine lines of demarcation still are drawn. But if the fundamental design has not changed, each man today may color it—as a child may his coloring book—to suit himself. Least of all need Mrs. Grundy be quakingly deferred to: sex is acknowledged, liquor approved.

The point is that not just one or two, but half a dozen related attitudes are culturally current; attitudes that the new type can mix and blend, arrange and alternate, to suit itself. In ideology, as in dress, gray flannels and odd jackets are quite correct: and at times the choice of odd jacket, the cut and color of the flannels, will be far greater evidence of belonging than the business suit. Indeed, as it becomes less obligatory to conform in strict detail, it becomes more important to show a certain real savvy of one's own. The key slogan is no longer "playing the game": it is "knowing the score." And of course the catch is that the score is always changing, and that in the end one must spend not less time, but more, in order to be *au courant*.

It is in a sense because success has become identified with knowing

the score, rather than with simply learning the rules, that there is ever less true individualism in America. The English, with their class differences and more conservative social habits, may appear a great deal alike—at any rate, class by class; actually they remain more individualistic simply for being more unadaptable. The American's ingrained adaptability, his quick surrender to his surroundings, indicates a sort of fear of individualism. Nor is this just a matter of when-in-Rome-ism: to adapt oneself as a visitor is quite different and completely sound. And of course much so-called unconventionality means nothing: a true individualist never balks at conventions bred of a desire for maximum ease. When Dr. Johnson declared that it made things much simpler to know that a lord goes through a door ahead of a commoner, he was no more striking a blow against individualism than against equality: he was only interested in saving everybody time. Your true individualist will make himself as quickly felt in a sonnet as in free verse, in a dinner jacket as in corduroys and a beard: Flaubert, the arch anti-bourgeois, quickly nailed "the Philistine in overalls." The true individualist is very much, I think, like the true artist. In their social roles, most real artists are simple, even commonplace, and quite lacking in mannerism, because their talent all goes into their work; there is no need, as there is with the artist *manqué*, for it to slop over into their lives. So with your true individualist, who will either come to the country-club dance or stay home; but if he comes, it will be because he wants to, and he won't sniff and sneer at it while he's there. A certain firmness bordering on rigidity, a marked sense of character, betrays the individualist; and there will usually be much that is plainly French or English or American, Breton or Cockney or Yankee, about him; a good deal that springs from his family background or his early years. With your fashionable rebel, on the other hand, everything springs from later environment. Your determined *avant-gardist*, your orthodox Bohemian, can only cast off the bulk of an unwanted past by casting out something of himself as well. But from never surrendering *himself*, the true individualist is less apt to shed much of his background. He will seldom know, because he will seldom care, whether he is "conforming." Simply because it suits him best, he may continue to

dine at six o'clock, and to eat the same kind of dinner he had as a boy. True individualists tend to be quite unobservant: it is the snob, the would-be sophisticate, the frightened conformist, who keeps a fascinated or worried eye on what is in the wind. Where mere fashion is concerned, individualists are usually the last to lay the old aside, if they lay it aside at all. Whom fashion bores will care as little about keeping up with the times as about keeping up with the Joneses.

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The English are more individualistic than Americans because, though where they *are* enslaved, they are totally so, they are enslaved, on the whole, by fewer things. There are certain things an Englishman will not do, for the sublime reason that such things are not done. Such transgressions are the mark of a cad or a bounder, or they are proof of one's not being a gentleman, or a gentleman's gentleman, or whatever one wishes to be taken for. The sight (to the rest of the world) of an Englishman shoveling a small meal on to the back of his fork, and then pile-driving it into his mouth, seems every bit as needless as it is revolting; to a well-brought-up Englishman, any other form of feeding is unthinkable, and always laughed off as sickeningly genteel. The English, in other words, are the slaves of Thou Shalt Not: they will never flout what long tradition specifically, however insanely, frowns upon. On the other hand, where a sacred tradition doesn't enter in, they completely suit themselves: fanatical about the Ten Commandments, they are anarchists in all else. I have seen Londoners, with perfect aplomb, walking the streets at midday in white ties and tailcoats[1]; and I wouldn't have been surprised had they been carrying muskets or birdcages into the bargain. And as with their outfits, so with their ideas. Their assurance springs from a very accurate knowledge of just when they must carry on, or play the game, or not let Eton or Ealing or England down; it springs from a deep sense—according to the only laws they respect—of being clearly, indisputably, in the right. To "adjust" in such circumstances would hence not just be difficult; it would be close to treasonable.

[1]Some one will probably explain to me that they had been to a levee; but that still leaves out of account their aplomb in walking the streets.

But if Thou Shalt Not quite governs the Englishman, he is much less affected than the American by You Really Must. The difference is a matter of motive: the Englishman wants to be recognized as a gentleman, or as some other suitable species of human being; the American wants to be considered a good guy.[2] One virtue of British Thou Shalt Not is that it merely creates key points, rather than an entire pattern, of behavior. British taboos are curiously assorted, and oftener arbitrary than logical; they correspond to the idioms rather than the grammar of a language. And being prohibitions, they are things to observe rather than imitate; in other words, one is obeying the law, not following the fashions. The penalty for disobeying is ostracism; that for not conforming (along American lines) is unpopularity. The difference is in some ways profound: the Englishman either walks free or is sentenced to hang; the American has to worry about all the forms of social punishment between the two.

Plainly enough, American conformity springs in large measure from the American love and readiness for change. America is so inventive that its people have come not just to follow the cultural fashions, but to count—subconsciously at least—on there always being new fashions to follow. And Americans are kept so busy buying all the latest gadgets, inspecting all the latest novelties, sampling all the latest forms of entertainment, that they have a real need of bulletins and by-laws and conducted tours: if they *didn't* run with the crowd, they would be in grave danger of losing their way. Not that all these minor adventures in living make American life terribly adventurous: the activities in a prosperous suburb of any large American city must be in most respects as prejudice-ridden and unimaginative as in any community that comes to mind. By comparison, a New England village—however full of kinks and intolerance—will seem almost anarchically rich in character; and even a Southern town boasts a touch of feudal boldness along with its measure of feudal thinking. Nor are the ways of prosperous Suburbia always a matter of large symbolic conformities—Gentile, Republican, Chamber of Commerce, the things that prove a man "all right"; nor

[2] There was at least a trace of this in President Eisenhower's wearing a Homburg rather than the traditional silk hat on Inauguration Day.

of the things that prove he rates—Protestant, well-fixed, college-bred. These latter requirements will at times seem too much to ask for; we are by now a *faute-de-mieux* democracy, where half the people who rate actually lack some of the prime requirements for rating: and though the usual "good" suburb is something better than a mere melting pot, it comes much closer to being fruit punch than any sort of vintage wine. Its frequent thinness of "background" thus makes foreground-behavior unusually important.

The foreground, as a result, must largely be façade. There can be much show of novelty, but true adventurousness is seldom allowed. People simply indulge the same inclinations in different forms; people simply voice the same opinions in different language. People, moreover, advance in step; turn left or right in squads. If you are too unorthodox for the community, you move away or find friends elsewhere; and equally if you are too rich. Otherwise, you fit into a world where people live better at fifty than at forty, and at forty than at thirty—but not better than one another. With few exceptions, their houses are much of a size, they keep the same number of servants, send their children to much the same schools, join much the same organizations, play bridge and golf for much the same stakes. Those who are of a like social and economic class will, to be sure, break up into smaller groups: there will be a decorous set—the "backbone" of the community; there will be a gay set that drinks, gambles, and at least flirts with the other man's wife; there will be a set that makes some show of "keeping up with things," that has a nodding acquaintance with the arts and a wading acquaintance with Bohemianism. Such a community likes to feel that it isn't too "sot"; it very much wants a few wags and characters in its midst, one or two highbrows and mild parlor radicals, and men—though not women—with a past. It wants its tidy symbols of the untidy ways of life; but it wants them to exist much like characters in artificial comedy—where all is appearance and nothing reality, where there are picturesque crises but no actual consequences. The eccentric, at the proper time, shall wear a proper dinner coat; the parlor radical be a last-minute Republican at the polls; the Bohemians shall know good food from bad; and though the highbrow shall be trotted out for

company, or appealed to in disputes, he shall never hold forth on Baudelaire when the others are ready for bridge.

In the bigger cities, among the better-income groups, there exists a kind of halfway house between conformity and individualism—a kind of mild cosmopolitanism that at least saves people from being stodgy and provincial. This perhaps discourages individualism even more than conformity does, since what it produces has the character —or lack of it—of a chameleon. The usual such cosmopolite is all spectrum and no prevailing color; speaks any number of social languages and has no real native tongue. Of course if he moves in identical societies in New York, Paris, Rome, if all he knows is bankers and businessmen, luxury liners and Ritz hotels, he must then, despite his knowledge of the best place in every capital to buy good gloves or good cigars, be dismissed as a provincial in disguise. And if, at the other extreme, he is a genuinely distinguished *homme du monde*, as much at home in colleges as in clubs, in senates as in libraries, he is then—whether a Henry Adams in one generation or a Harold Nicolson in another—too exceptional to express anything widespread in society. But there is a garden-type cosmopolite that lies between the other two.

In New York, for example, one can be, if not a true individual, a kind of companion to individuals. New York abounds in creative people—writers, painters, composers, architects; in intellectuals of every kind, whether philosophers or scientists, psychiatrists of half a dozen schools, professors in half a dozen universities. New York equally abounds in foreigners come to study or teach, lecture or give recitals; in professional men—lawyers, doctors, publishers, engineers; in authorities on highways or housing or city planning; in politicians and publicists. Furthermore, what is important, New York abounds in hostesses whose métier is bringing all the forementioned together. And though, at the most exalted levels, one is part of a world of celebrities, there is an equal cosmopolitanism—or opportunity for it—lower down; there is even something better about it lower down. For at the topmost level there are too many lions to make for anything so varied as a zoo.

But this kind of life is clearly limited to, at most, a few large cities:

in more provincial communities, one encounters something depressingly ardent and self-conscious. Culture becomes organized into the Literary Club and the Arts Club and the Busy as Three B's Music Club, and the Women's Club lunches and the University Club suppers. In such communities "many-sidedness" is entrusted, and confined, to women: it is a rare man who is interested in how his better half lives. Or at lower levels, where men do participate, many-sidedness has a different basis. It can be the crassest and most Philistine kind of joining and "mixing"—lodges, alumni associations, business groups, civic committees. It can be, again, a kind of friendly Bohemianism, a determination not to fall into ruts: one spends one evening with the Jewish family down the block, another with the Italian family round the corner, a third with a rug merchant who serves Turkish coffee. Often one doesn't go with these people because they deeply interest one, but rather as one reads certain books or visits certain countries, because it is "broadening" and is something to talk about afterwards. The solution to the passing boredoms of bourgeois life will never for long be the charm of Bohemian living, or the picturesqueness of foreign ménages. Few are the resultant richer lives, though many the recipes for *Streuselkuchen* or *espresso*. This is actually a form of mere tourism, of stay-at-home traveling.

The larger-sized university town has a chance for something better. Here, town and gown can be really useful to each other: for in the usual such town, there are few people to provide stimulation; while in the usual compact college world, there is no one to answer back. College faculties produce a great many people who are to all appearances highly individualistic; but the average professor can be narrow-minded as well as absent-minded; and any faculty forced to find all its social life on the campus can't help becoming inbred. The situation in small academic communities must be truly difficult; quite unlike that in, say, New York, where Columbia professors often choose to live as far from the campus as possible and when they leave Columbia for the day become completely independent of it. For the Columbia professor, the world is all before him where to choose; but can as much be said for, say, a professor at Brown, with Providence his guide?

Ideally, such cities as Providence, which are state capitals as well as university towns, should provide a very good kind of life. Here is every chance to mingle, and almost every kind of man. Here one should get beyond what is dreary and stifling in middle-class living; beyond all notions of right and wrong sides of the railroad track; beyond having to pay undue honor to the symbols—country clubs, Chambers of Commerce, good-guyism—that dominate American life.

And yet what this tends to produce in the end—and there is even no assurance that it will produce *that*—is rather eclecticism than individualism; a kind of informal education through others rather than any true expression of oneself. It offers a desirable and a frequent change of diet, but not necessarily any genuine nourishment. We are not always aware, I suspect, of the difference between leading a full life, and being oneself; nothing is perhaps better than travel, except a true and deep and very personal sense of home. Without that sense, one is in danger of becoming a receptacle at the cost of being a person. Nor is oddity ever proof of individuality. I was once taken to eat at a New York lunch club of pedigreed bankers; after lunch, members sat about with their hats on: what one looked in vain for was an individualist with his hat off.

It is not easy, of course, to detect individualism, since the truer the individual, the less will he be given to outward demonstrations of it. Individualism is rather like innocence: there must be something unconscious about it. To be sure, in a society where public opinion speaks in such powerful tones it becomes harder and harder to be quietly oneself, and to do as one pleases. It becomes increasingly necessary to *display* character, to reveal strongmindedness, to stand out against this and stand up against that; it becomes increasingly harder not to be thought stuffy or surly or cranky. Moreover, I suspect that people can more safely flout public opinion by refusing to climb on bandwagons than refuse, among their own friends, to play ball or be good sports. Many more people will risk being thought sinners than saints, wastrels than prigs; and though the basis for most satire on human pose and pretension is people's wanting to be accounted more cultured or intellectual or artistic than they really

are, in recent times the satire might more appositely have concerned their pretensions to being he-men, good guys and low-brows. The he-man aspect stands somewhat apart from the other two, and is new only in certain details: obviously, the male animal has always been concerned with asserting its masculinity. Also, the past thirty-five years has put a peculiar emphasis on sex; has been an era in which sex first became a touchstone of social emancipation, and then a basis for personal insecurity. America had no sooner got rid of being ashamed about sex than it grew ashamed about the lack of it. Mrs. Grundy had scarcely been routed when Dr. Kinsey arrived; and if one didn't kiss and tell, one at least kissed and didn't rub off the lipstick.

The he-man aspect—born partly of man's wish to strut, partly of the "emancipation" of the twenties, partly of our growing sex anxieties—has more point to it than the desire of the educated classes to seem like regular guys, and even low-brows, at all cost. "No man," said Dr. Johnson, "is a hypocrite in his pleasures"; but though the remark has a fine Johnsonian ring to it, it is unsound. A great many people are utter hypocrites in their pleasures: gush over Wagner but get drowsy at *Lohengrin*; pant over chamber music, palpitate over art exhibitions; but from the brave smiles they wear, you might suppose they were having a leg set instead of their senses ravished. And today, it seems to me, the loftier pleasures breed hardly more hypocrites than the low-brow ones. There are as many people today who fake their fun because they want you to think they are good fellows as because they want you to think they have beautiful souls. They like buttermilk but they guzzle beer; like croquet, but take up Kelly pool; have a yen for Bryn Mawr girls, but carry on with chorines.

Take, again, the matter of language. Undoubtedly, as life has grown informal, speech has grown more colloquial and slangy. Still, there has been a simultaneous increase in jargon, in medical, sociological, psychiatric and scientific terms: this is the age when every coalheaver speaks of "antibiotics" and—as poseurs-in-reverse—most college professors like to use slang. All this is a further sign of our inartistic natures; and vivid evidence, too, of our fear of seeming different. Almost every one today swears more than his father did, but the level of speech means nothing; one can talk like a book as

well or as badly as one talks like a boilermaker; and clichés are clichés, whether too hard to pronounce or too filthy to print. Obviously, the loss in real communication among educated people who go in for "She's a honey" and "He's a bastard" is immense; and the loss is not one in elegance merely (which most people would judge no loss at all), but in precision, in recourse to irony, and—where people clash—in that urbanity that can increase stimulation yet lessen heat. Vernacular abuse, today, badly lacks freshness and color; and when alcohol (a *sine-qua-non* of good-guyism) goes arm in arm with cliché profanity, good-guyism can paradoxically turn into the worst kind of brawl. But even brawls are "human": the real sin is to act superior, and a whole special vocabulary has arisen to stigmatize putting on intellectual airs: *high hat*, *upstage*, *snooty*, *fancy-schmantzy*, *Haavard*, *high-brow* and how many others. But these days putting on airs can really be no more than a refusal to put on other people's clothes; no more than a desperate insistence on being oneself.

Among high-brows, there is an instinctive defiance of regulation good-guyism; but they have their own brand of flirtation with the low-brow, their own distinct brand of conformity. And high-brows, where they do conform, are perhaps the worst prigs and fetichists of all. They will play tennis, but not golf; poker, but not bridge; watch movies, but not television; relax over detective stories, but not over crossword puzzles. We all know why: golf and bridge are symbols of everything bourgeois, and often evoke unpleasant memories of a bourgeois past. But intrinsically the differences are trifling; are largely matters of taste; and are frequently examples of the most unworthy snobbism. And much too much has been made of the idea that while middle-brow culture is awful, low-brow is fine. To be sure, low-brow is usually preferable to middle-brow, possesses something coarse, honest and vivid where middle-brow is slick, genteel, and innately vulgar. But an enormous lot that is low-brow is merely stupid or cheap; an enormous lot is simply a bore. Virginia Woolf's attack on middle-brow helped sanctify low-brow in an unwise degree; to which Aldous Huxley's attack on modish low-browism is a valuable offset. To be sure, primitivism has a strong and recurrent appeal, and the serious artist himself will often be refreshed or inspired

by encountering it. My point, in any case, is less the merits of low-brow than its present excessive fashionableness among non-low-brows.

As I have said, an American has a wide choice of conformities, and the opportunity to mix and blend them. But he must stay within bounds, he must not seriously infringe the doctrine of good-guyism; must very seldom be thought a bastard, and must never be called a heel; and such terms as *bastard*, *heel*, and *quitter*, are blanket terms for every kind of spoilsport, fuss-raiser or refusal to go with the crowd. Depending on the particular situation, one must be "cooperative," "open-minded," "community-minded"; be willing to "listen to reason," to "see the other fellow's point of view," to "act one's age," and above everything else, "play ball."[3] And involved in all this is a genuine impulse to do right, to prove helpful, to make life pleasant. But the fine phrases all too often accompany an intolerance of minority feelings; and good-guyism and majority-rulism, beyond being hostile to individuality, are becoming, more and more, the bedchamber-women of self-righteousness. Where such attitudes so strongly prevail, whoever subscribes to them can't help feeling self-assured. And to the regular guy who is so much fortified by public opinion, the irregular guy must seem more than merely odd or affected; he must seem downright wilful and unco-operative. Moreover, the average American's objection to oddity and nonconformity is in large part genuine, for it springs from a real lack of identification; from a truly bewildered sense of "Who the hell can *want* to see an Italian movie instead of an American one?" or of "Who the hell could want to spend his vacation studying beetles instead of going to the seashore?" And when such freakish tastes happen, in addition, to clash with the conformist's own desires, the individualist becomes not just a wack that can be ignored, but a nuisance, or even a menace, that has to be dealt with. There arises a real objection, not just an unconscious resentment.

[3] From the national game we have indeed taken the master phrases of the age: "play ball," that key to popularity, which is really half the battle of getting ahead; and "know the score," that proof of savvy and alertness, which is the other half. Though of course—and the national game still prevails—to get anywhere, a guy has to have something on the ball to begin with.

The American imagination has perhaps been stunted by a kind of paradox—by the fact that the whole basis of American living is a vivid dream. But it is a highly blueprinted dream, a series of set, established visions; and the average American has grown so accustomed to his own form of dreaming that he can comprehend no other. In a sharply stratified society, those who acquiesce in their own way of life can thereafter turn their gaze outward, will have the time and the curiosity to grasp the nature of other ways of living, other beliefs and ideals. It is the realist, who studiously learns the strict value and use of things, that can in time assess the value and use of things not his own: the very ability to compare and distinguish fosters understanding. But the idealist, all of whose values are more or less theoretical, so many of whose acts are acts of faith, is nurtured by, is committed to, a dream. The materialistic idealism that governs American life, that on the one hand makes a chariot of every grocery wagon, and on the other a mere hitching-post of every star, lets every man lead a very enticing double life, a life of strive and succeed alike, of go with the crowd and yet personally follow the gleam. What other road should he seek, what other will be more brightly lighted or prettily landscaped or widely traveled? Individuality in America is getting to be less and less sought after: hence it needn't even be proscribed. It is disappearing through lack of demand.

Here the fact that there is a whole network of conformities in America, rather than just a single pattern, strongly enters in. Americans by no means all do things alike; they just don't do them differently from every one else. There are cliques as well as crowds; summer rules as well as winter ones; group revolts no less than group conformities. Furthermore, the truly grown-up problem isn't how to be oneself *out* of society, isn't Walden Pond as against Boston, but how to remain oneself inside it. One of the saddest things about conformity is the ghastly sort of nonconformity it breeds: the noisy protesting, the aggressive rebelliousness, the rigid counter-fetichism. The village atheist would have come to exist even with *God* for a next-door neighbor, for he is an offshoot not of religion but of society; the *avant-gardist*, again, is the last man to quietly cultivate his *avant-garden*. In terms of set culture and community prejudices,

Bohemia and Philistia are, like photograph and negative, the same things in reverse. In Greenwich Village and Greenwich, Connecticut, there are probably an equal number of things the inhabitants wouldn't be caught dead wearing, or furnishing their houses with, or tolerating among their friends, or subscribing to as beliefs; and each place will feel for the other an exactly equal contempt.

I suspect, too, that the American distaste for individualism is partly due to our past forms of moral nonconformity; to our early crop of militant puritans and cranks. In pioneer days it must have often seemed as though cantankerousness were next to godliness. Our fetish of the good guy may well owe something to our inherited fear of the Puritan; the back-slapper may well be a retort upon the blue-nose; it has perhaps required all of the American dream to blot out the Early-American nightmare. And once dissent has become associated with disapproval of all normal pleasures, clearly the inducements of a conformist society will prove very great; and the accompanying good-guy psychology will in time prove quite decisive. Even now, to be sure, a sense of guilt pervades the professional classes, the intellectual and quasi-intellectual world; though this is a sense of guilt derived from Freud rather than from Jonathan Edwards. Something remains, of course, of the old New England conscience—and with it, quite admirably, something of the old New England character. But in general we are today a people who much less fear God than hate themselves. Moreover, where our current guilts aren't Freudian, they seem rather Catholic than Protestant—rather the Catholic puritanism of Ireland than the Congregationalist puritanism of New England. What dominates, in any case, is much less guilt than self-righteousness, much less breast-beating, again, than back-slapping. Even the clergyman—whether priest, minister or rabbi—does well to prove a good mixer; the church or synagogue to stress its clubroom and recreation hall. America possesses a few, but only a few, truly august figures, whether real or symbolic; the others best flourish by blending authority with affability. In all of this, there is a sound desire to avoid the pompous: nothing delights us more than to find that the President of our country, or of our college, or of our corporation, is really one of the boys. This seems

to me a valuable trait, a real safeguard against Communist or Fascist blandishments; we want our leaders to display the human touch.

Our well-founded distaste for cranks has, however, rather blurred our ability to tell a crank from a mere eccentric, or even an eccentric from an individual. On a very rough-and-ready basis, we might define an eccentric as a man who is a law unto himself, and a crank as one who, having determined what the law is, insists on laying it down to others. An eccentric[4] puts ice cream on steak simply because he likes it; should a crank do so, he would endow the act with moral grandeur, and straightway denounce as sinners (or reactionaries) all who failed to follow suit. The crank, however, seldom deals in anything so agreeable as steak or ice-cream; the crank prefers the glories of health bread or the splendors of soybeans. Cranks, at their most familiar, are a sort of peevish prophets; and it's not enough that they should be in the right, others must also be in the wrong. They are by definition obsessed; and, by connotation, obsessed with something odd. They mistake the part for the whole, the props for the play, the inconvenience for the efficacy; they are spoilsport humanitarians, full of the sour milk of human kindness. They fail of love no less than of humor, and seem most ready to plough the earth where they can spoil the lawn.

The crank is for several reasons a fairly common figure in American life. To begin with, our reaction against cranks has helped breed more of them. A society that worships good-guyism brands the mere dissenter a misfit; and people who are shunned as square pegs will soon find something deeply immoral about round holes. A society, again, that runs to fads and crazes, that has a natural turn for the ingenious and inventive, will encourage some of its members to be cranks, and will doom others. There must be, so to speak, lots of factory-damaged human products that, from being looked upon as rejects, come to crankhood rather than to true creativity.

Where a crank is either a moral crusader by nature or a man at war with his surroundings, an eccentric is neither given to crusading nor

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[4] Many "eccentrics" are, of course, mere poseurs and publicity seekers. But many are real, and I speak here only of such.

oppressed by the world. The great blessing of eccentricity is that, since it is a law unto itself, one isn't constantly torn between what is expedient on the one side, and what is personally desirable on the other. Something of an anarchist (as your crank is something of a bigot), the eccentric will often display very unsound, or unsocial, habits and beliefs. But his wrongheadedness is not self-righteous; he doesn't drag God into keeping a pet leopard in his backyard, or Americanism into going in for rifle practice at two a.m.

True eccentrics, I would think, are fairly rare; for they must not only differ from other people, but be quite indifferent to other peoples' ways: they must, in other words, be as well-adjusted as they are odd. So soon as maladjustment enters in, they cease to be characters and turn into cases. On the other hand, many people who with a little encouragement might emerge as eccentrics are, from childhood on, judged—and hence turned into—misfits. Where their peculiarities are mocked, and certainly where they are penalized, the results can be very unhappy. In America, where even the slightest individualist must resist great pressure, the true eccentric is never free from it. In England there is a proud tradition of eccentricity: the English are far more given than we are to keeping strange pets, collecting strange objects, adopting strange careers; even where they most conform, as in their club life, they will behave toward one another with what, to other races, seems a wild and splendid strangeness. This is so true that England's—and sometimes New England's—eccentricities have often a great air about them: consider how Julia Margaret Cameron would walk the two miles from her house to the railway station stirring a cup of tea as she went. In England and New England, as opposed to America in general, there may be a quite opposite basis for eccentricity: in the one case, the law unto oneself born of social privilege; in the other, the self-created world born of being left out of things. The English eccentric suggests a *grande dame*, the American a spinster.

The individualist is by no means an eccentric, he is for one thing aware of alternatives: he refuses to play ball rather than doesn't know a game is in progress. Yet, more and more, the individualist is being looked upon as an eccentric and perhaps even a crank; though this

attitude is scarcely deliberate on the public's part, it yet subconsciously—or by force of repetition—constitutes a pressure to make people conform. The other method of diminishing individualism in America has been to foster and develop "personality." Though the difference between "personality" and individuality is vast, there exists a strong, however thoughtless, tendency to identify one with the other. So greatly has conformity triumphed that no matter how orthodox a man's opinions or conventional his behavior, if he happens to express or conduct himself with the slightest vividness or briskness he is rated and touted a "person"—what might be supposed an individual! Actually, he may not even have an iota of real personality; may just possess a breezy, adaptable, quick-on-the-trigger manner that enables him to be the life of the party or the spark plug of the conference. Yet there *are* a great many Americans with true personality—with an easy charm, a distinctive manner, a regional tang. They have the appeal, at the very least, of not being like every one else. But that they are, in the cliché sense, "real persons" is to be doubted. One may go a year without hearing them utter an original, not to say controversial, remark; or seeing them perform a striking, not to say truly unorthodox, act. The centrifugal and extrovert charm of personality is in many ways hostile to individualism, which more naturally manifests itself in withdrawal than in contact, in quiet dissent than in eager acquiescence. Personality and individuality are by no means mutually exclusive, nor is genuine personality necessarily engaging nor genuine individuality necessarily difficult. But the fact remains that we regard personality as a decided blessing, as something a man can't have too much of; and individuality as, oftener than not, a handicap. Individuality is almost by definition anti-social; and the sound "social" maneuver is to discredit individuality and even outlaw it through enabling people to live *colorfully* alike. As for "personality," it has passed from having great social to acquiring great economic importance: it is the prime mark, and prize asset, of the salesman. And ours is the country where, in order to sell your product, you don't so much point out its merits as you first work like a demon to sell yourself.

William Maxwell

WHAT EVERY BOY SHOULD KNOW

A Story

Shortly before his twelfth birthday, Edward Gellert's eyes were opened and he knew that he was naked. More subtle than any beast of the field, more rational than Adam, he did not hide himself from the presence of God or sew fig leaves together. The most he could hope for was to keep his father and mother, his teachers, people in general from knowing. He took elaborate precautions against being surprised, each time it was always the last time, and afterward he examined himself in the harsh light of the bathroom mirror. It did not show yet, but when the mark appeared it would be indelible and it would be his undoing.

People asked him Who is your girl? And he said I have no girl, and they laughed and his mother said Edward doesn't care for girls, and they said All that will change.

People said Edward is a good boy, and that was because they didn't know.

He touched Darwin and got an electric shock: ". . . the hair is chiefly retained in the male sex on the chest and face, and in both sexes at the juncture of all four limbs with the trunk . . ." There was more, but he heard someone coming and had to replace the book on the shelf.

He stopped asking questions, though his mind was teeming with them, lest someone question him. And because it was no use; the questions he wanted to ask were the questions grown people and even older boys did not want to answer. This did not interrupt the incessant kaleidoscopic patterns of ignorance and uncertainty: How did they know that people were really dead, that they wouldn't open their eyes suddenly and try to push their way out of the coffin? And how did the worms get to them if the casket was inside an outer casket that was metal? And when Mrs. Spelman died and Mr. Spelman married again, how was it arranged so that there was no embarrassment later on when he and the first Mrs. Spelman met in Heaven?

Harrison Gellert's boy, people said, seeing him go by on his way to school. To get to him, though, you had first to get past his one-tube radio, his experimental chemistry set, his growing ball of leadfoil, his correspondence with the Scott Stamp and Coin Company, his automatically evasive answers.

Pure, self-centered, a moral outcast, he sat through church, in his blue serge Sunday suit, and heard the Reverend Harry Blair who baptized him say solemnly from the pulpit that he was conceived in Sin. But afterward, at the church door, in the brilliant sunshine, he shook hands with Edward; he said he was happy to have Edward with them.

In the bookcase in the upstairs hall Edward found a book that seemed to have been put there by someone for his enlightenment. It was called *What Every Boy Should Know*, and it told him nothing that he didn't know already.

Arrived at the age of exploration, he charted his course by a map that showed India as an island. The Pacific Ocean was overlooked somehow. Greenland was attached to China, and rivers flowed into the wrong sea. The map enabled him to determine his latitude with a certain amount of accuracy, but for his longitude he was dependent on dead reckoning. In his search for an interior passage, he continually mistook inlets for estuaries. The Known World is not, of course, known. It probably never will be, because of those areas the mapmakers have very sensibly agreed to ignore, where the terrain is

different for every traveler who crosses them. Or fails to cross them. The Unknown World, indicated by dotted lines or by no lines at all, was based on the reports of one or two boys in little better case than Edward and frightened like him by tales of sea monsters, of abysses at the world's end.

A savage ill at ease among the overcivilized, Edward remembered to wash his hands and face before he came to the table, and was sent away again because he forgot to put on a coat or a sweater. He slept with a stocking top on his head and left his roller skates where someone could fall over them. It was never wise to send him on any kind of involved errand.

He was sometimes a child, sometimes an adult in the uncomfortable small size. He had opinions but they were not listened to. He blushed easily and he had his feelings hurt. His jokes were not always successful, having a point that escaped most people, or that annoyed his father. His sister Virginia was real, but his father and mother had no existence apart from him, and he was aware of them mostly as generalities, agents of authority or love or discipline, telling him to sit up straight in his chair, to stand with his shoulders back, to pick up his clothes, read in a better light, stop chewing his nails, stop sniffing and go upstairs and get a handkerchief. When his father asked some question at the dinner table and his mother didn't answer, or, looking down at her plate, answered inaudibly, and when his father then, in the face of these warnings, pursued the matter until she left the table and went upstairs, it didn't mean that his mother and father didn't love each other, or that Edward didn't have as happy a home as any other boy.

Meanwhile, his plans made, his blue eyes a facsimile of innocence, he waited for them all to go some place. Who then moved through the still house? No known Edward. A murderer with flowers in his hair. A male impersonator. A newt undergoing metamorphoses. Now this, now that mirror was his accomplice. The furniture was accessory to the fact. The house being old, he could count on the back stairs to cry out at the approach of discovery. When help came, it came from the outside as usual. Harrison Gellert, passing the door of his son's room one November night, seeing Edward with his hand

at the knob of his radio and the headphones over his ears, reflected on Edward's thinness, his pallor, his poor posture, his moodiness of late, and concluded that he did not spend enough time out of doors. Edward was past the age when you could tell him to go outside and play, but if he had a job of some kind that would keep him out in the open air, like delivering papers . . . Too shocked to argue with his father (you don't ask someone to give you a job out of the kindness of their heart when they don't even know you and also when there may not even be any job or if there is they may have somebody else in mind who would be better at it and who deserves it more). Edward went downtown after school and stood beside the wooden railing in the front office of the *Draperville Evening Star*, waiting for someone to notice him. He expected to be sent away in disgrace, and instead he was given a canvas bag and a list of names and told to come around to the rear of the building.

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From five o'clock on, all over town, all along College Avenue with its overarching elms, Eighth Street, Ninth Street, Fourth Street, in the block of two-story flats backed up against the railroad tracks, and on those unpaved, nameless streets out where the sidewalk ended and the sky took over, old men sitting by the front window and children at a loss for somthing to do waited and listened for the sound of the paper striking the porch, and the cry—disembodied and forlorn—of "Pay-er!" Women left their lighted kitchens or put down their sewing in upstairs rooms and went to the front door and looked to see if the evening paper had come. Sometimes spring had come instead, and they smelled the sweet syringa in the next yard. Or the smell was of burning leaves. Sometimes they saw their breath in the icy air. A few minutes later they went to the door and looked again. Left too long, the paper blew out into the yard, got rained on, was covered with snow. Their persistence rewarded at last, they bent down and picked up the paper, opened it, and read the headline, while the paper boy rode on rapidly over lawns he had been told not to ride over, as if he were bent on overtaking lost time or some other paper boy who was not there.

In a place where everybody could easily be traced back to his origin, people did not always know who the paper boy was or care what time he got home to supper. They assumed from a general knowledge of boys that if the paper was late it was because the paper boy dawdled somewhere, shooting marbles, throwing snowballs, when he should have been delivering their paper.

Every afternoon after school the boys rode into the alley behind the *Star* Building, let their bicycles fall with a clatter, and gathered in the cage next to the pressroom. They were dirty-faced, argumentative, and as alike as sparrows. Their pockets sagged with pieces of chalk, balls of string, slingshots, marbles, jackknives, deified objects, trophies they traded. Boasting and being called on to produce evidence in support of what ought to have been true but wasn't, they bet large sums of unreal money or passed along items of misinformation that were gratefully received and stored away in a safe place. Easily deflated, they just as easily recovered their powers of pretending. With the press standing idle, the linotype machine clicking and lisping, the round clock on the wall a torment to them every time they glanced in that direction, they asked What time is the press going to start?—knowing that the printing press of the *Draperville Evening Star* was all but done for, and that it was a question not of how soon it would start printing but of whether it could be prevailed upon to print at all. When the linotype machines stopped, there was a quarter of an hour of acute uncertainty, during which late news bulletins were read in reverse, corrections were made in the price of laying mash and ladies' ready-to-wear, and the columns of type were locked in place. The boys waited. The pressroom waited. The front office waited and listened. And suddenly the clean white paper began to move, to flow like a waterfall. Words appeared on one side and then on the other. The clittering clattering discourse gained momentum. The paper was cut, the paper was folded. Smelling of damp ink, copies of the *Draperville Evening Star* slid down a chute and were scooped up and counted by a young man named Homer West, who never broke down or gave trouble to anyone. Cheerful, even-tempered, he handed the papers through a wicket to the seventeen boys who waited in line with their canvas bags slung over one

shoulder and their bicycles in a tangle outside. One of them was Homer's brother Harold, but Homer was a brother to all of them. He teased them, eased the pressure of their high-pitched impatience with joking, kept them from fighting each other during that ominous quarter of an hour after the linotype machines fell silent, and listened for the first symptoms of disorder in the press. When it began chewing paper instead of printing, he pulled the switch, and a silence of a deeply discouraging import succeeded the whir and the clitter-clit-clatter. The boys who were left said I can't wait around here all night, I have homework to do. And Homer, waiting also, for the long day to end and for the time still far in the future when he could afford to get married, said Do your homework now, why don't you? They said Here? and he said Why not? What's the matter with this place? It's warm. You've got electric light. They said I can't concentrate. And Homer said Neither can I with you talking to me. He said It won't be long now. And when they insisted on knowing how long, he said Pretty soon.

The key to age is patience; and the key to patience is unfortunately age, which cannot be hurried, which takes time (in which to be disappointed); and time is measured by what happens; and what happens is printed (some of it) in the evening paper.

Just when it seemed certain that there would be no more copies of that evening's *Star*, the waterfall resumed its flowing—slowly at first, and then with a kind of frantic confidence. One after another the boys received their papers through the wicket, counted them, and with their canvas bags weighted, ran out of the building to mount their bicycles and ride off to the part of town that depended on them for its knowledge of what was going on in the outside world in the year 1922.

After their first mild surprise at finding Eddie Gellert in the cage with them, the other boys accepted his presence there, serene in the knowledge that they could lick him if he started getting wise, and that they had thirty-seven or forty-two or fifty-one customers in a good neighborhood to his thirteen in the poorest-paying section of town. His route had been broken off one of the larger ones, with no harm to the loser, who, that first evening, went with him to point

out the houses that took the *Star*, and showed him how to fold the papers as he went along and how to toss them so they landed safely on the porch. After that, Edward was on his own.

The boys received their papers from Homer in rotation, and it was better to be second or third or fourth or even fifth than it was to be first, because if you were first it meant that the next night you would be last. "Pay-er . . ." Edward called, like the others. "Pay-er?"—with his mind on home. His last paper delivered, he turned toward the plate kept warm for him in the oven, the place it would have been so pleasant to come to straight from school. But he was twelve now, and out in the world. He had put the unlimited leisure of childhood behind him. As his father said, he was learning the value of money, his stomach empty, his nostrils burning with the cold, his chin deep in the collar of his Mackinaw.

How much money his father had, Edward did not know. It was one of those interesting questions that grown people do not care to answer. Since his mother was also kept in the dark about this, there was no reason to assume he could find out by asking. But he knew he was expected to do as well some day, and own a nice home and provide decently for the wife and children it was as yet impossible for him to imagine. If all this were easy to manage, then his father would not be upset about lights that were left burning in empty rooms or mention the coal bill every time somebody complained that the house was chilly. Life is serious and without adequate guarantees, whether your mother takes in washing or belongs to the Friday Bridge Club. Poverty is no joke—but neither is the fear of poverty never experienced. Every evening Edward saw, like a lantern slide of failure, the part of town he must never live in, streets that weren't ever going to be paved, in all probability, houses that year after year the banks or the coal company or old Mr. McIvor saw no need for repainting or doing anything about, beyond seeing to it that the people who lived in them paid their rent promptly on the first day of the month.

On Saturday mornings he came with his metal collection book and knocked and the door was opened by a solemn, filthy child or a woman who had no corset on under her house dress and whose

hair had not been combed since she got out of bed. The women gave him a dime and took the coupon he held out to them as if that were the commodity in question. If they asked him to step inside he held his breath, ignoring the bad air and an animal odor such as might have been left by foxes or raccoons or wolves in their lair. The women wadded the coupon into a ball or, if they were of a suspicious turn of mind, saved it for the day when he would try to cheat them, and they could triumphantly confront him with the proof of his dishonesty. If they didn't have a dime (often the case in that part of town) or were simply afraid, on principle, to part with money, they put him off with every appearance of not remembering that they had put him off the week before and the week before that. He turned away, disappointed but trying desperately to be polite, and the paper kept on coming.

Regardless of how many customers paid or put off paying the paper boy, the *Evening Star* claimed its percentage every Saturday morning. Any other arrangement would have complicated the bookkeeping, and the owners of the paper did not consider themselves responsible for the riot that broke out, one Friday afternoon, in the cage next to the pressroom. The boys refused to take the papers Homer held out to them through the wicket, and nothing that he said to them had any effect, because their grievances were suddenly intolerable and they themselves were secure in the knowledge (why had they never thought of this before?) that the *Star* was helpless without them. The word "strike" was heard above the sound of the press, which had started on time, for once, and which went right on printing editorial after editorial advising the President of the United States to take over the coal mines—with troops if necessary, since the public welfare was threatened.

At quarter of five, home was not as Edward had remembered it. There was nothing to do, nobody to talk to except Old Mary, and she said Now don't go spoiling your supper! when all in the world he wanted was company. He went back through the empty uneasy rooms and settled in a big chair in the library with a volume of *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* on his lap. He didn't read; he only looked at the pictures (a farmhouse near Shiloh, the arsenal at Harper's

Ferry) and listened for the sound of a step on the front porch. It was dark outside, and people all over town were beginning to look for the evening paper. His mind was still filled with remembered excitement, triumph that blurred and threatened to turn into worry. But then he turned a page. This had the same effect as when a dreamer, waking, escapes from the nightmare by changing his position in bed.

Virginia came in, and Edward called out to her, but she rushed upstairs, too absorbed in her own world of spit curls and charm bracelets, of what Ossie Dempsey said to Elsie McNish, of TL's and ukuleles, to answer her own brother. And where was his mother?

Mildred Gellert, unable to get along with her husband, unable to bear his bad temper, his nagging, had tried leaving him. Sometimes she took the children with her and sometimes, with her suitcases in the front hall, she clung to them and told them they mustn't forget her, and that when they were older they would understand. The trouble was, they did understand already. For a time it was very exciting, full of subtle moves (she communicated with Harrison through her lawyer) and countermoves (his mother came and kept house for him) like a chess game. The Gellerts' house, no matter who ordered the meals and sat at the opposite end of the dining-room table from Harrison Gellert, had a quality of sadness. This was partly architectural, having to do with the wide overhanging eaves, and partly because the shrubbery—the bridal wreath and barberry—had been allowed to become spindly and the trees kept the sunlight from the lawn. Neither surprised by its own prosperity, like the Tudor and Dutch colonial houses in the new addition to Draperville, nor frankly shabby, like other old houses of its period, the Gellerts' house and yard were at a standstill, having reached their final look, which owed so much, apparently, to accident, and so little to design or intention or thought.

When Edward walked into Virginia's room she was lying on the bed reading a movie magazine, and she implied that she would just as soon he went somewhere else. Not that he cared. He sat slumped in a chair until she said, "Do you have to breathe like that?"

"Like what?"

"With your mouth open like a fish."

Nothing made him so uncomfortable as being reminded of some part of himself that there was no need to be reminded of. It took all the joy out of life. "This is the way you breathe," he said indignantly. "Just let me give you an imitation."

She laughed scornfully at his attempt to fasten on her a failing she did not have, and so he reminded her—a thing he had meant not to do—that she owed him thirty cents. This led to more insinuations and denials, in the heat of which he forgot he was home early until his mother, standing in the doorway with her hat on, said, "If you children don't stop this eternal arguing, I don't know what I will do!" Neither of them had heard her come upstairs. They looked at each other, conspirators, on the same side. "We're not arguing."

Convicted without a hearing (their mother went on to her own room) they drew apart from each other again. Virginia said, "That was all your fault. I didn't ask you in here, and you're not supposed to come in my room unless I ask you in." Which was a rule she made up, along with a lot of others.

Before they even realized they were arguing again, a voice called, "Children, please! please!" Their mother's voice, so nervous, unhappy, and remote after the Friday Bridge Club. It embarrassed them, reminding them of scenes at the dinner table and conversations between their mother and father that floated up the stairs late at night after they were in bed.

Edward went into the bathroom and ran lukewarm water into the washbasin. It takes patience and some native skill to make a pumice stone float. Absorbed in this delicate task, Edward forgot about his grimy hands and also about the hands of the clock. A warning from his mother as she started down the stairs (how did she know he was in the bathroom) woke him from a dream of argosies, and the stone boat sank. He arrived in the dining room out of breath, his blond hair slicked down and wet, his hands clean but not his wrists, and an excuse ready on his tongue. He had decided not to mention the strike but it came out just the same. Halfway through dinner it burst out of him, and he felt better immediately.

"How did it start?" Harrison Gellert asked. The lamp that used to hang low over the dining room table, with its red and green stained

glass, its beaded glass fringe, had been replaced, in the last year or two, by glaring wall brackets, a white light in which nothing could be concealed.

"I don't know," Edward said. He passed his plate for a second helping. The plate was filled and passed back to him, and then his father said, "You were there, weren't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, all I'm asking you to tell me is what happened. Something must have happened. How did the strike get started in the first place?"

"I don't remember," Edward said.

He glanced at his sister, across the table. She had stopped eating and with a lurking smile, as if to say *You're going to catch it*, waited for him to flounder in deeper and deeper. He did not hold this against her. The shoe was often enough on the other foot.

"It seemed like it just happened," Edward said, hoping that this explanation, which satisfied him, was truthful and accurate, would also satisfy his father. "I left my arithmetic book in my desk at school and had to go back and get it."

Pleased to have recalled this detail, he stopped and then saw that his father was waiting for him to go on.

"When did the boys decide they weren't going to deliver their papers, before you got there or after?"

"After."

"But the trouble had already started?"

"Not exactly."

"You mean it was like any other evening."

Edward shook his head. What he could not explain was that the boys were always threatening to strike, to quit, to make trouble of one kind or another.

"What are you striking about?"

"The collection. We're supposed to go around collecting on Saturday morning. And people are supposed to pay us, and we're supposed to pay the *Star*. We pay Mrs. Sinclair seven cents and keep three. Only lots of times when we ask for the money, they—You want to see my collection book?"

"No. Just tell me about it."

There were times when, if it hadn't been for the reassurance of Edward's monthly report card, Harrison Gellert would have been forced to wonder if his son were a mental defective. No doubt he was passing through a stage, but it was a very tiresome one.

"Sometimes we have to wait five or six weeks for the money," Edward said.

"But you get it eventually?"

Edward nodded. "But she takes her share right away, out of whatever we do collect, and it's not fair."

"What's unfair about it?"

"She has lots of money and we don't."

"What else are the boys striking for?"

"When the press breaks down, sometimes we don't get home until after seven o'clock. One night it was nearly eight."

"It isn't Mrs. Sinclair's fault that the press breaks down."

To this Edward made no answer.

"What else?"

"We want more money."

"How much more?"

"Oh, let the poor child alone!" Mildred Gellert exclaimed, raising her wan, unhappy face from her salad and looking at her husband.

"He's not a child," Harrison Gellert said. "And I'm not picking on him. How much did you make this week?"

"Thirty-seven cents," Edward said. "But some of it was back pay. I only have thirteen customers. Barney Lefferts has the most. He has fifty-two. He makes about a dollar and a half a week when he gets paid."

"That's very good, for a boy."

"I guess so," Edward said.

"Did anybody take the trouble to explain to Mrs. Sinclair why you were refusing to deliver the paper?"

"Oh, yes, but she didn't listen to us. She was awful mad. And Homer was standing there, too."

"What did she say to you?"

"She was inside, where the press and the linotype machines are."

"But what did she say?"

"She tried to get us to deliver the papers. So we all went outside and left her."

"And then what happened?"

"The other guys jumped on their bicycles and rode off."

"And what did you do?"

"I came on home."

"Who's going to deliver our paper?" Virginia asked.

"Nobody, I guess. They can't, if we're all on strike." Edward turned back to his father. "Do you think I did wrong?"

"It's something you're old enough to decide for yourself," Harrison Gellert said. Edward was relieved. On the other hand, it wasn't the same thing as being told that he had his father's complete and wholehearted approval to take part in a strike any time there was one. If he hadn't gone on strike with the others, it would have been uncomfortable. He would have had enemies. The school yard would not have been a very safe place for him, and neither would the alley in the back of the *Star* Building, but actually he had wanted to go out on strike and he had enjoyed the excitement.

"They'll have to take us all back, won't they?" he asked. "Since we all did it together?"

"Finish your potato, dear," Mildred Gellert said. "You're keeping Mary waiting." She was not young any more; she had given up searching for her destiny and had come home, for the sake of the children. Acceptance has its inevitable meager rewards. The side porch was now enclosed, and it was generally agreed that the new green brocade curtains in the living room had cost Harrison plenty.

During dessert Edward remembered suddenly that he was saving his money to buy a bicycle, and the rice pudding stuck in his throat and would not for the longest time go down. When the others left the dining room, he lingered until Old Mary finished clearing the table and with her hand on the light switch said, "You figure on sitting here in the dark?"

Edward got up and went into the library, where his mother and Virginia were. His mother was sewing. She was changing the hem on Virginia's plaid skirt. Edward sat down, like a visitor waiting to be entertained. He heard the front door open and close, and then his

father came in and sat down in his favorite chair and (quite as if he hadn't understood a word of all that Edward had been telling him) opened the evening paper.

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When the paper boys ran out of the building, Harold West got as far as the door when Homer called to him. Homer said, "You stay here, Harold," and Harold stayed. After he had delivered his own papers, he rode back downtown and with a list supplied by the front office, he and Homer started out together. Ever so many houses had no street numbers beside the front steps or on the porch roof; or else the numbers, corroded, painted over five or six times, could not be seen in the dark. Not every subscriber to the *Draperville Evening Star* got a paper that night. The lists were incomplete, and there is not adequate substitution for habit. The office stayed open until ten, and there were a few telephone calls, but most people were not surprised that the evening paper, arriving at such different times every night, should finally have failed to arrive at all.

On Saturday morning, Edward went downtown. He saw a knot of boys standing on the sidewalk in front of the *Star* Building. The riot was over, the strike had collapsed, and though they had counted on him to act with them, they had not bothered to inform him of their surrender. If he hadn't been led there by curiosity, he would have been the only one not now apologizing and asking to have his route given back to him.

Riot, in the soul or in an alley, wears off. It is not self-sustaining. Reason waits, worry bides its time. The recording angel assigned to mark the sparrow's fall took a little extra space in order to record the fact that George Gibbs, Harry Lathrop, John Weiner, Bert Savage, Dave O'Connell, Marvin Shapiro, Barney Lefferts, Edward Gellert, and nine other sparrows were flying and fluttering against a net of their own devising.

One at a time the boys were allowed to go inside. Through the plate glass window Edward saw Barney Lefferts, sitting in a straight chair beside Mrs. Sinclair's desk, with his eyes lowered, anxiously twisting his dirty old cap while she talked on and on. Once, with

an odd gesture or pleading, he interrupted her; he said something that she brushed aside. When Edward looked in the window again, Barney Lefferts was crying. While you are learning the value of money, you learn also—you can't, in fact, help learning—that whoever has it has the right to withhold it. Courage doesn't count, in these circumstances.

When Barney Lefferts came out of the building, all that was behind him and he was triumphant. He said, "Jesus, I got my route back!"

Edward's interview with Mrs. Sinclair was short, and the scolding he got from her was restrained, out of respect for his father's credit and certain social distinctions that both Edward and Mrs. Sinclair were aware of.

"I'm very disappointed in you, Edward," she said. "I know, of course, that you wouldn't have done what you did if you hadn't been led astray by the others. But there was somebody who didn't let himself be led astray. Harold West delivered papers until eleven o'clock, last night, and Mr. Sinclair and I are very grateful to him." She played with a paper clip, and then said, "I know you are sorry, but that isn't the same as if you had behaved in an honorable way, is it? I've decided to let you have your route back, but I want you to promise me, on your word of honor, that if such a thing ever happens again around here, you will be on the side of the Newspaper."

Edward promised, conscious of the fact that her thin, flat chest would not be comforting to put his head on, in time of trouble. He was grateful, but not to her. While he was waiting his turn outside, he had made a bargain: he had offered to give up, from now on, for the rest of his life, the secret, sinful practices that would fill people with horror if they knew and that made God (who did know) sad, if God would give him back his paper route, and God had done it.

"We were thinking of giving you a larger route, Edward," Mrs. Sinclair said, "but I'm afraid, in the light of what happened yesterday . . . Well, we won't talk about it any more. What's done is done. Suppose you go and do your Saturday morning collecting."

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The promise to Mrs. Sinclair, Edward never had an opportunity to keep. The promise to God he broke, over and over and over. He prayed, he made new promises, he offered acts of kindness, acts of self-denial, in place of the one renunciation he could not manage. And though he knew it could not be so, it almost seemed at times as if God did not mind what he did as soon as he had the house all to himself; or else were trying to make Edward feel worse, because he did get the larger paper route, with fifty-three customers, in a much better part of town, and the total in his bank book rose higher and higher, with compound interest in red, and finally, on a clear bright windy day in September, Edward went to his father's office after school and a few minutes later they walked around the courthouse square to the bank, and from there they went to Kohler's bicycle shop, where Edward, with his father's solemn approval, parted gladly with his savings and rode off on his heart's delight. The new bicycle was blue and silver, and stood out conspicuously among all the other bicycles in the two long racks in the school yard. It had a headlight and a tool case. He adjusted the handlebars so they were low like the handlebars of a racing bike, and then rode without using them at all, unless it was a matter of keeping the front wheel out of the streetcar track. Boys asked to try his new bicycle out, and rather than get into a fight about it, he let them have a brief ride, but it was agony to him until they jumped off and let him have his Blue Racer again. When the bicycle got rained on, he dried it with a rag he kept in his canvas bag. At night he stood it in the woodshed, out of the dew. He would have taken it into his bed if this had been at all practical.

The bicycle was still new, he had only had it a few weeks, when it was run over. It happened on a Saturday noon. Hungry, in a hurry to get home for lunch, he rode up in front of the *Star* Building. A voice in his head reminded him that the boys were not allowed to leave their bicycles in front of the building, and another voice said promptly She won't see it, and even if she does, this once won't matter . . . He leaned his bicycle carefully against the high curbing and went inside. There were two boys ahead of him. While he was

counting the money in his change purse, a boy opened the street door and shouted, "You better come out here, Gellert! Somebody just ran over your new bicycle!"

Without any feeling whatever, as if he were dreaming, Edward went outside, and a man he'd never seen before said, "I didn't know it was there, and I backed over it."

Edward kept right on, without looking at the man, until he reached the edge of the sidewalk and could look down at what ought to have been somebody else's ruined bicycle, not (oh please not) his.

His mouth began to quiver.

The man said, "I'm sorry," and Edward burst into tears. What had happened was so terrible, and he felt such pity for the mangled spokes, the tires torn from their rims.

Mrs. Sinclair, seeing that there was trouble of some kind in front of the building, left her desk and went to the door. She looked at the bicycle and then at Edward standing there blindly, with the tears streaming down his face. "You're not supposed to leave your wheels in front of the building," she said, and went inside. People gathered around Edward, trying to console him. The man who had run over Edward's bicycle got into his car and drove away. Someone told Edward his name, and where he lived.

That night Harrison Gellert backed the car out of the garage and, with Edward in the front seat beside him, drove out to the edge of town and stopped in front of a one-story frame house in a poor neighborhood. "You wait here," he said, and got out and went up the brick walk. A man came to the door, and Edward saw a lighted room. His father said something and the man said something. Then he held the screen door open, and his father stepped inside and the door closed. Edward waited in perfect confidence that his father would tell him that it was all settled and the man was going to buy him a new bicycle. Instead, his father came out, after about five minutes, and got in the car and started the engine without saying a word. They were halfway down the block before he turned to Edward and explained that the man didn't know anything about his bicycle.

"But they *said* it was him!"

"I know," Harrison Gellert said. "He may not have been telling the truth."

Conscious of how quiet it had become in the front seat, he added, "Would you like to drive downtown for an ice cream soda?"

They parked in front of the ice cream parlor, and his father honked and a high school boy came out, with a white apron around his hips, and took their order. A few minutes later he reappeared with two tin trays and two tall chocolate sodas. The soda was as good a comfort as any, if Edward had been allowed to eat it in silence, but Harrison Gellert was genuinely distressed and sorry for his son, and his sympathy took the form (as it had in the past when he tried to comfort his wife) of feeling sorry for himself. "As you get older," he said, "you will find that a great many things happen that aren't easy to bear. Things you can't change, no matter how you try. You have to accept them and go right on, doing the best you can."

"But it isn't right!" Edward burst out. "He ran over it. It's his fault!"

"I know all that."

"Then why doesn't he have to pay for it?"

"If it was his fault, he *ought* to pay for having your bicycle repaired. But you can't make him do it if he doesn't want to."

A year earlier, Edward would have cried out, "But *you* can!" He thought it now, but he didn't say it.

"We'll find out from Mr. Kohler how much it will cost to have your bicycle fixed, and I'll go fifty-fifty with you, when it comes to paying for it."

Edward thanked his father politely, but there was no use talking about having his bicycle fixed. It would never be the same. The frame was sprung, and you could always tell a repainted bike from one that was straight from the factory. His father could go to court if necessary, and the judge would make the man pay for ruining his bicycle, and maybe fine him besides.

"It may be cheaper in the end to get a second-hand bicycle," Mr. Gellert said.

With an effort Edward kept the tears from spilling over. He didn't

want a second-hand bicycle. He wanted not to leave his new bicycle in front of the *Star* Building where it would be run over.

And Mr. Gellert wanted to say and didn't say, "I hope this will be a lesson to you."

It was a lesson, of course, in the sense that everything that happens, good or bad, is a lesson.

Edward Gellert was thirteen going on fourteen when the paper boys went on strike against the *Evening Star*, and he was fourteen going on fifteen when his bicycle was run over. One half the individual nature never seems any different, from the cradle to the grave; the other half is pathetically in step with the slightest physical change. Edward's voice had deepened, hairs had appeared on his body where Darwin said they should appear, his feet and hands were noticeably large for the rest of him, and something would not allow him to kneel in the dark beside his bed and ask God to give him back his new bicycle. People might be raised from the dead, as it said in the Bible, but a ruined bicycle could not by any power on earth or in Heaven be made shining and whole again.

INCUBUS

What did the caterpillars do
last time the Phoenix died?
  They beat their breasts with a hundred fists
till one of them espied
the egg the ashes incubate.
Then, sure that wings would flame again,
they broke their bread on a mulberry leaf
and out of himself each wove the sheath
from which he'll burst on flaming wings
  after the peace of a season's sleep,
  after the peace of a season's sleep.

What did the little children do
when Christ was last time crucified?
  Each hid beneath a mulberry wreath
and on one another spied.
For they were playing Prisoner's Base
and as the teams hid face to face
the only thing that mattered much
was which was caught and which would catch
  before the evening grew more dark,
  before the earth and air grew dark.

THE SEALS IN PENOBSCOT BAY

hadn't heard of the atom bomb,
so I shouted a warning to them.

Our destroyer (on trial run) slid by
the rocks where they gamboled and played;

they must have misunderstood,
or perhaps not one of them heard

me over the engines and tides.
As I watched them over our wake

I saw their sleek skins in the sun
ripple,light-flecked,on the rock,

plunge,bubbling,into the brine,
and couple & laugh in the troughs

between the waves' whitecaps and froth.
Then the males clambered clumsily up

and lustily crowed like seacocks,
sure that their prowess held thrall

all the sharks, other seals, and seagulls.
And daintily flipped the females,

sea-wenches with musical tails;
each looked at the Atlantic as

though it were her looking-glass.
If my warning had ever been heard

it was sound none would now ever heed.
And I, while I watched those far seals,

tasted honey that buzzed in my ears
and saw, out to windward, the sails

of an obsolete ship with banked oars
that swept like two combs through the spray

And I wished for a vacuum of wax
to ward away all those strange sounds

yet I envied the sweet agony
of him who was tied to the mast

when the boom,when the boom,when the boom
of guns punched dark holes in the sky.

AN ARMADA OF THIRTY WHALES

(Galleons in sea-pomp) sails
over the emerald ocean.

The ceremonial motion
of their ponderous race is

given dandiacal graces
in the ballet of their geysers.

Eyes deepset in whalebone vizors
have found a Floridian beach;

they leave their green world to fish.
Like the Pliocene midge, they declare

their element henceforth air.
What land they walk upon

becomes their Holy Land;
when these pilgrims have all found tongue

how their canticles shall be sung!
They nudge the beach with their noses,

eager for hedgerows and roses;
they raise their great snouts from the sea

and exultingly gigantically
each trumpets a sousaphone wheeze

and stretches his finfitted knees.
But they who won't swim and can't stand

lie mired in mud and in sand,
And the sea and the wind and the worms

will contest the last will of the Sperms.

Peter Quennell | **AMERICA UNVISITED**

An English critic's view of
American fact in American fiction

Until the closing period of his existence, when depression and exhaustion finally overcame him, H. G. Wells remained the most cheerful of disappointed prophets. Few of his hopes for society had materialized; many of his gloomiest predictions seemed on the verge of coming true; and there were moments when the former biologist was tempted to regard the entire human race as a biological eccentricity, a "sport" only to be compared with the generations of the giant lizards, which Nature had tried out in vain and would presently discard for good. Yet these premonitions, alarming as they were, could not quench the vitality of a naturally exuberant man. He still delighted in the spectacle of existence, liked to ask questions—comparing his early experiences with the problems of the current age—and much enjoyed letting off an occasional explosive paradox. Thus, at our last meeting, he informed me that, although again and again he had traveled to and fro across the American continent, he had now definitely reached the conclusion that there was "no such place as America," since wherever he went—whether he was in New York or San Francisco, Florida or Massachusetts—somebody was sure to sound the warning: "*This* isn't America, you know." The

real America had proved so elusive that he believed he was justified in regarding the whole of the United States as a titanic geographical hoax.

Having often regretted that my own acquaintance with America was exceedingly slight and superficial, I was consoled by the thought that, even though the days and weeks I had spent on the other side of the Atlantic had extended into months and years, I too might have failed to get to the heart of the great American mystery. True, I could claim to have visited New York and observed the island of Manhattan in many odd climatic phases, to have struggled through a tropical summer, breasted the rigors of an arctic winter, and admired the magnificence of its tawny cliff-dwellings against the bright blue skies of spring and fall. I had also paid my respects to Washington's monuments and avenues, and had passed a brief, sultry, unprofitable week-end on or near the Saratoga racecourse. But none of these places, I myself had been warned, was genuinely "American"; and I therefore concluded that, if I ever dared to write about America, the title I chose must be "America Unvisited." The opportunity has at length arisen; and I approach my subject in a mood of respectful doubt, conscious how little I know and, given its exceptional difficulty, how little I can expect to contribute . . .

Nevertheless, a country may be unvisited and yet succeed in making its influence constantly and distinctly felt. The least-traveled European of the present age can no more escape from America than an American of the eighteenth century could have escaped from Europe. "Americanism" has a pervasive effect; and, whereas on one plane it may be expressed in symbols of exotic luxury or material prosperity—a shining car, a streamlined industrial device, a garish Coca-Cola sign or a thick glossy magazine, advertising a sugared ham, a Thanksgiving turkey or Miss Marilyn Monroe—on another level, it has begun to enter into almost every department of the European consciousness. But, whereas many of the phenomena that America produces are nowadays sufficiently well known, their origins for the average European—even for the intelligent and thoughtful observer—remain very largely unexplored. It is as if European scientists had studied the flora and fauna of Africa or

farthest Asia, but Africa and Asia themselves were almost virgin territory. From a mass of stimulating, disturbing, highly colored and often contradictory evidence, we are asked to build up some impression of an unfamiliar landscape and climate. Our investigations have been additionally confused by a series of fantastic travelers' tales. Have our travelers been to the right place? They admit that they are not completely sure.

As a professional writer and reviewer of books, I propose to conduct my tentative researches partly through the printed word. Literature, after all, is, among many other things, the painstaking compilation of ordinary day-by-day experience; and nowhere does the climate of an age, or the character of the human beings born into it, receive more forceful illustration. Literary masterpieces, of course, provide the clearest record; but books that fall short of genius—on occasions, books that are definitely third-rate—may add some detail to the historian's idea of the civilization that he is studying. In certain respects a reviewer's life is hard; but he has the advantage of being obliged to read novels that more leisurely and fastidious readers can afford to pass by—works in which the desire to communicate experience has not yet been subjected to any form of aesthetic discipline, which yet contain material as valuable and suggestive as the modern psychologist's case-histories. The distortions and imperfections of the pictures they draw may perhaps be no less illuminating than the inspired discoveries of a talented writer.

Inevitably, I must proceed by generalizations; and the habit of generalization is always hazardous and sometimes totally disastrous. A reporter on the sex-war who writes of "men" and "women," imputing to each sex certain easily distinguishable characteristics, must sooner or later run aground; while the sociologist who discusses "Americans," "Englishmen," "Frenchmen," without allowing for the fact that every nation is primarily an assemblage of individual human beings, and only secondarily, more or less by accident, the combination of a racial group, cannot hope to steer clear of some preposterous misstatements. For over a thousand years England and France have been in extremely close touch; but a stout anthology (which I have considered editing) might well be devoted

to the grotesque assertions published by each people about their nearest neighbors. The Atlantic is still broader than the English Channel; and, in the relationship of Great Britain and America, a common language has encouraged the belief that, because we speak the same tongue, we must necessarily think along the same lines, and that there is nothing to deter us from forming summary judgments upon the nature of our differences.

Here I trust that I may be excused if I insert a personal anecdote. Mr. Edmund Wilson is a highly intelligent critic who writes English so well, and has studied English literature so thoroughly, that no doubt he assumes he is fully conversant with all the nuances of the modern English scene. But that, besides being unusually prejudiced, he is often remarkably ill-informed, must be plain to every reader of his postwar travel book. Many of his observations are too wide and vague to be easily controvertible. I was particularly struck, however, by one incident that he professes to describe, and by the generalization that he derives from it, since I myself figure in the incident and contributed to the dialogue that he here reports or misreports. According to Mr. Wilson, at a "high-brow" London party he overheard the conversation of a couple of English writers, both of them temporarily enrolled in the wartime Fire Service. Englishmen, he tells his readers, are obstinately attached to their youth and find it difficult ever to emerge from the glutinous chrysalis of an unnaturally prolonged childhood. They are perpetually rambling on about the good old days; and his two acquaintances, when discussing the Fire Service, of which they wore the uniforms, compared it unfavorably with the traditional English public school, thus revealing their innate reluctance to shoulder the burden of adult standards. Now the speakers were Stephen Spender and myself, neither of whom could be described as typical champions of the Old School Tie; and what we actually said—I remember the conversation—was that, wearisome and irritating though we often found our wartime lot, at least the Fire Service was staffed by Cockney officers who had never heard of the "team spirit," and that it thus bore mercifully little resemblance to the middle-class educational system.

Such are pitfalls that await the ingenious critic who attempts to

squeeze his observations into the Procrustean bed of a pre-concerted critical theory. Convinced that the English were a race of Peter Pans (for which he had some justification, but not nearly so much justification as suited his existing thesis), Mr. Wilson heard and reported only those fragments of the conversation which would help him drive his point home. Other travelers have followed his example—with almost equally ridiculous results. The standpoint of the cautious Herodotus, therefore, is much to be preferred to that of the self-confident author of *Inside Nearly Every Country*; and what I have to say about contemporary Americans is put forward with the same reserves as Herodotus employed in recording his stories about the Persians and the Arimaspians. Let me begin with a simple and, I imagine, practically indisputable statement—that America is a land of extremes, and that an element of moral and intellectual *extremism* would appear to be firmly established in the transatlantic character. Thus the student of the modern American novel, who wishes to discover a parallel for the personages and general atmosphere of many of the books he is considering, will look, not to the narrative tradition founded in England and France during the past two hundred years, but to the works of the great Russians, notably to Dostoevsky. I can visualize Stavrogin in American dress, the self-destructive Dimitri and the saintly Alyosha; for each carries to a violent extreme the tendencies and potentialities he has discovered in his own nature. None can do anything by halves: they have little in common with the worldly, reflective, self-doubtful dramatis personae who crowd the European stage.

The same tendency appears in the sphere of individual conduct. Among Americans (it strikes the European) every role is exploited to the full, and every attitude carried to the utmost limits. Moral puritanism and political conservatism assume uncompromisingly rugged shapes; while liberalism and private Bohemianism—as evidenced, for example, by American foreign colonies—acquire an exuberance that the average European finds somewhat bewildering and overwhelming. American hilarity leaps and crackles like a forest fire: the gloom of a despondent American threatens to submerge us like a new Deluge. Our reading, moreover, of the American press would

appear to indicate that those rapid changes of mood are not confined to private life, but that the temper of the nation as a whole is subject to similar variations, alternating between radiant optimism and the darkest pessimism. As I write, I have before me an extract from a speech by ex-President Truman, printed in an English newspaper, in which he tells his audience that he is gravely concerned at the manipulation, "for purely political reasons," of a wave of "fear and hysteria" sweeping through the country. The ex-President's alarm, I am prepared to believe, may be very much exaggerated: but that he should have expressed it in the first place is at least significant. American booms and slumps—elation and depression—are customarily on the grand scale.

With a liking for extremes goes a distrust of half measures. The French were long puzzled by the stolidity of the English temperament; and today Americans are often surprised and annoyed by a hard-won equanimity which, in their less generous moments, they are apt to mistake for apathy or cynical lethargy. Christian moralists said of pagan society that the Roman world "went laughing to its death"; and, conscious of the dangers that now encircle us, the American critic of modern Europe (whose composition often includes a strongly puritanical strain) does not perceive that stoicism and cynicism are not inevitably the same thing. A similar impatience with European standards is frequently exhibited by American novelists. Suspicious of verbal sophistication and descriptive light-and-shade, they become convinced that true literary excellence can only be achieved by radical simplification of their style and subject matter. The simplicity they aim at must, of course, be extreme; and we have the spectacle, for instance, of Ernest Hemingway, a novelist whose christening was attended by many potent good fairies, as he advances from novel to novel gradually despoiling himself of the gifts he has inherited. *The Sun Also Rises* is an exceptionally brilliant book which, besides revealing a splendid descriptive ability, includes detailed and well-rounded portraits of several different men and women. In *A Farewell to Arms* the balance has shifted. Whereas the descriptive passages are still extraordinarily vivid, the men and women who occupy the foreground have a flat and dimensional air.

Though naturally encouraged to feel—physical sensation is the sum of enjoyment—they are seldom permitted to think, and never allowed to derive as much pleasure from thought as they do from sensation and action. Hemingway's women are almost always dummies, partly, I imagine, because they must represent Woman first—just as the unfortunate hero is usually cast in the role of Man—and their subtler, non-sexual characteristics, if anywhere mentioned, are thrown in as an afterthought. Hemingway was a young writer of astonishing promise, whose robust yet sensitive talent has since been slowly, deliberately whittled down. Finally we reach *The Old Man and the Sea*, where pseudo-poetic abstractions replace individual human beings. I find primitive Man and primeval Fish a poor exchange for the more elaborately organized creations who populate his earlier stories.

Yet Hemingway at his best has an energy and gusto much needed in contemporary fiction. He avoids the turgidity of Thomas Wolfe—whose cult of too-muchness seems to have included the belief that a single efficient word must never be allowed to take the place of seven or eight, since in literature as in war, fortune favors the big battalions—and he shuns the tortured intricacies that obscure the pages of William Faulkner. But everything he does, he tends to overdo; and that quality of intemperate enthusiasm distinguishes the American adoption of many ways of modern thought. To judge by a recent trial, and the revelations and recriminations by which it was preceded and followed, ardent Liberals of the New Deal years sometimes moved on from Liberalism to Communism, without ever feeling quite certain where one of them ended and the other began. Similarly, I have noticed that psychoanalysis, which offers a relief from so many forms of tension produced by divergent private impulses and divided public loyalties, gains converts both far more numerous and far more zealous in the United States than in Great Britain or France. In some circles it would appear to rank as a substitute almost for religious faith. Those who discuss their favorite topic are lit up by an inward glow; and I recollect how, while I was engaged upon a biography of John Ruskin, I remarked to a charming and intelligent American woman that it seemed odd that a middle-

aged man as neurotic as Ruskin should have managed to discover in Rose La Touche a correspondingly neurotic young girl. At which my companion who, up to that point had been only moderately attentive, responded with a sudden flash. A neurotic, she assured me, always gravitated towards a neurotic's embrace. They were like insects whose faint vibratory hum, entirely inaudible to the common ear, attracted their fellow insects across many miles of difficult country!

A further trait by which I have frequently been impressed is American love of protocol. Coexistent with a natural extremism is an instinctive respect for convention, which operates even at moments when, in a great many European societies, some of the stricter conventions are generally thrown overboard. Protocol is maintained in the pursuit of pleasure itself; and any European who has been involved by good-natured transatlantic hosts in a typical American "good time" may have felt that he was attending a solemn rite with its own ceremonies and regulations, consecrated by traditional usage. The rules of the game must be rigidly adhered to. So much alcohol must perforce be consumed; such and such a state of exhilaration or disintegration must be achieved towards the end of the evening. This was particularly evident during the War. Both allies found a good deal of relaxation necessary if they were to withstand the gloom of wartime restrictions and the horror and boredom of air raids; but the methods and relaxation they adopted proved in many ways completely different. The English pursued their pleasures eagerly, but also with a certain casualness; their American friends were apt to set forth with a look of heroic determination. Conviviality was in the air. But, while the English, if they got drunk, did so more or less by accident, the Americans would begin by announcing their plans for "going out and getting plastered." The result, admittedly, was often much the same. It was the initial approach to the business of relaxation that appeared to set the races apart.

Rigid social conventions and the struggles they provoke often figure, I have noticed, in the background of American fiction. How many contemporary novels and stories describe a hero or heroine at war with the traditional limitations of his or her environment!

What they rebel against is not society at large, but the tribal customs of some subsection of society in which they are imprisoned. Sometimes they are the victims of small-town life: sometimes the inhabitants of a large city or prosperous residential suburb. But—from *Babbitt* to *Appointment in Samara* or a volume of short stories I read a few weeks past entitled *The Enormous Radio*—we gather that, so long as they continue to submit to the dictates of the community in which they find themselves, their personal behavior, for good or ill, will continue to be rigidly circumscribed, even to the cars they purchase, the furniture they use, and their amatory and convivial habits. This impression may be entirely erroneous: Americans, we have been brought up to believe, are a people of individualists. But, in that event, American authors must be suffering from a collective nightmare.

Thirdly, a brief glance at transatlantic puritanism: by which I mean not the fiery zeal of the revivalist or social reformer (who has a direct link, though he may not care to acknowledge it, with English nonconformist zealots of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) but a strain of puritanical feeling that frequently persists in the outlook of the most sophisticated and genuinely cultured individuals. As one digs down through layer after layer of belief—through a rich humus deposited by years of thought and reading—suddenly the explorer's pickax rings upon a foundation of native Plymouth Rock. This basis of inherited idealism—a conviction that, fundamentally, the good things are the simple things, and that a few simple truths underlie all the complexities and perplexities of the modern universe—is none the less solid and enduring for being often rather deeply buried. It has had, for example, a considerable effect upon American foreign policy. Without it, neither Wilson nor Roosevelt might have fallen such an easy prey to the craft of Old World Machiavels. And a disappointed idealist, like a disillusioned lover, may become a permanently embittered man.

Finally, there is the question of pace. Some of the failures in communication between English and Americans obviously arise from the fact that they think and talk at different speeds. Where one race is fond of dallying, the other is prone to take intellectual short cuts. In

technical imagination and the art of "getting things done," the American mind is clearly better equipped than that of the average European; but it assumes a far more leisurely gait when setting to work upon an abstract subject. If he has not yet lost his original respect for knowledge, the European, with so much of the world's achievement stacked up behind him on his library shelves, crammed into his museums, overflowing his picture galleries, has ceased to expect that knowledge alone will provide the key to every problem. Some problems may be entirely insoluble—including the major problem of human existence. But that any question should lack a ready answer, and that any theory, however complex, should not at length be reducible into perfectly straightforward and concrete terms, is an idea plainly repugnant to the transatlantic sense of fitness. Hence the massive compilations of the more ponderous type of American scholar, who, during the course of his sabbatical year, digs up every piece of information, relevant or irrelevant, from his appointed field of study, and arranges his material in a sort of Himalayan cairn on some lonely academic peak. Hence the "well-informed" divagations of the political conversationalist. I was once privileged to know an American blue-stocking, descended from a President of the United States, who, glass in hand, could improvise on any topic of the day a whole authoritative newspaper leader, with every paragraph balanced and every sentence carefully measured, scarcely drawing breath except to sip her highball. In the reverent silence that attended her efforts, I used to imagine, now and then, that I could actually hear the punctuation—commas and semicolons rattling into place, the brisk tap of the full-stops. . . .

From these scattered remarks on the American mystery it may be inferred that the relationship of America and England impresses me as peculiarly hazardous. Nothing, however, could be more untrue; for once we have seen beyond the delusion of similarity created by our common language, and have agreed that the differences that divide us are, in many respects, almost as significant as the similarities that unite us, we may acquire a wider appreciation of the points on which we stand together. Many misunderstandings would be quickly dissipated if we admitted that the cause of the misunderstanding

was not so much the incidental grievance from which it may appear to spring, as the mental attitude in which it is approached by the contending parties. Thus, a touch of bewildered benevolence characterizes the American attitude towards the peoples of the Old World. Americans are conscious of endeavoring to do their best; and, being idealists by temperament and tradition, they fail to understand why "good-neighborliness" is not more promptly repaid with demonstrations of popular gratitude. But gratitude, as Old World cynics have discovered, is a somewhat inconstant and capricious quality. No one enjoys the sensation of feeling grateful, particularly if his wounds still smart, despite the attentions of a Good Samaritan with Lend-Lease cruses of wine and oil. Were the philanthropist a little more cynical, his susceptibilities might be less acutely hurt.

To return, however, to the literary side of the question: if the American novel, as I have already suggested, displays "extremist" tendencies, a tinge of intellectual defeatism sometimes colors the outlook of modern English writers. It is not so much that they are literally "defeatist" as that they tend to eschew the wide themes and large-scale presentation adopted with such resounding success by their great Victorian forebears. In each country we have one or two first-rate or nearly first-rate novelists; but, among novels in the second or third rank, America seems nowadays to produce the larger proportion of interesting work. This may have something to do with the writer's material. Just as Paganini is said to have carried his virtuosity to so fine a point that he could evoke music from a shoestring, in theory at least a talented novelist should rise superior to the subjects he handles; but in fact, since even the best novelist has a touch of the reporter (who can be relied on to come to the rescue when the creator's imagination flags), no writer is any the worse for a constant provision of picturesque and exciting "copy." Compared with America, England is poor in material; for the widespread social revolution of the last half-century has had the effect of leveling the classes and of wiping out many of those local distinctions which once diversified the English landscape. Had Jane Austen's heroines been obliged to do their own housework, had the inmates

of Wuthering Heights spoken a language almost indistinguishable from that of the average modern radio-listener, had the inhabitants of Middlemarch dwelt within easy reach of London, they would have presented far less convenient targets for a writer's genius. Beneath the surface, the drama of human passions will never cease to roll along; and, primarily, a novelist's concern is with the unchanging lineaments of humanity rather than with the changing fashions in which human beings deck themselves. But the surface, neverthless, is always absorbing; and an old society in the process of rapid transition lacks both the charm of a young and growing society and the well-defined contours of an earlier, more stable world.

Modern America, on the other hand—or so it occurs to the English reader of American fiction—possesses literary resources that are still untapped. Vast territories still await description; and the breadth and diversity of their native landscape has an obviously exhilarating effect upon a large and not unimportant body of enthusiastic regional authors, in whom an ardent passion for the American scene takes the place of analytical delicacy or stylistic delicacy. Too many of our English novelists find it almost impossible to break away from a small circle of personal acquaintances: the heroes they introduce are too often themselves, while subsidiary characters bear too close a resemblance to the cultured and complicated, but fundamentally rather unrewarding, personages among whom they pass their daily lives. Even Virginia Woolf, with all her literary skill, never quite escaped from the little coterie of intelligent, sensitive but eminently self-centered people in which she had been born and educated. When she pretends to look down into the street and observe the hurry and rush of undistinguished passers-by, it is with an air of gallant resolve as though this exhibition of human curiosity were an arduous form of professional duty. We are aware of the soundproof and airproof pane that divides the privileged looker-on from the spectacle she is contemplating.

Now the inquisitiveness of the intelligent American is surely one of the most valuable aspects of the national character. All gifted communities have been inquisitive—none more so than the ancient Athenians; and St. Paul's reference to their thirst for knowledge and

avid interest in new things might equally well be applied to the modern citizens of the United States. It was formerly the habit of the sophisticated European to sneer at the American appetite for manuals of predigested culture; but the state of mind that engenders this appetite is one that I find wholly admirable. May it grow and prosper on either shore of the Atlantic, urging us to further discoveries and, if necessary, to fresh disputes! Misunderstandings, after all, are still an excellent test of friendship. It is the friendship unstrengthened by argument that often sinks into an early grave.

Ernest Nagel

THE PERSPECTIVES OF SCIENCE AND THE PROSPECTS OF MEN

There are two modes in which human life is influenced by new developments in theoretical science. Since the beginnings of systematic inquiry in classical antiquity, advances in fundamental knowledge have prepared the way for a more effective practical mastery of the environment; and the technological innovations to which they frequently give rise—in agriculture, industry, medicine, or warfare—have produced radical transformations in traditional patterns of social living. This aspect of science is now a commonplace in the writings of modern historians and students of human affairs. It is certainly not neglected in recent popular literature on the wonders wrought by present-day inventions. Indeed, many distinguished scientists with an attentive eye on the ultimate source of financial support for pure research are now stressing the practical fruits often gathered from investigations which initially do not promise such a harvest; and the utilitarian values of science undoubtedly loom large in the minds of those who today eventually foot the staggering costs of modern research. However, there is a second and less publicized way in which scientific developments affect men's lives: by challenging established beliefs about the cosmos and its parts, and inducing

emendations in habitual modes of thought. Revisions of ancient creeds and alterations in intellectual habits are not exclusively the products of major theoretical revolutions like those of Newton and Darwin; they may also be called forth by relatively minor additions to knowledge like those associated with voyages of exploration and the study of ancient or primitive cultures. The flood of books and articles in our own day on the bearing of current scientific discoveries upon inherited conceptions of nature and man is visible testimony to this aspect of the impact of science on human life.

Although there are different channels through which scientific developments exert their influence, changes in knowledge eventually lead to a re-examination of the ideals which express man's basic aspirations, of the principles by which men evaluate their actions, and of the methods which men employ in deciding between alternative moral claims. Technological innovations of any magnitude often make it difficult if not impossible to continue customary modes of conduct; and they may produce fashions of living that are not congruous with, or are not envisaged by, traditional moral ideals. Moreover, though new theoretical and factual discoveries do not always introduce any overt changes in social practice, they may nevertheless become highly pertinent in the evaluation of social policy and in the justification of moral attitudes. An ideal of human life which seems eminently reasonable on one set of factual assumptions may be utterly without cogency when viewed in the perspective of altered scientific conclusions. Accordingly, an integrated system of moral commitments can be disrupted by developments in science; and, individually as well as collectively, men are sometimes made distraught by felt incompatibilities between traditional moral standards and new advances in knowledge. Reflective men are thus perennially confronted with a threefold task of criticism: of clarifying the bearing of trends in scientific inquiry upon pervasive conceptions of man's place in nature; of making explicit the intellectual methods by which responsibly held beliefs are achieved; and of interpreting inherited beliefs and institutions in the light of current additions to knowledge—all this, in order to exhibit the enduring wisdom which may be embodied in them.

It has been the traditional office of philosophy, whether lay or professional, to contribute to this difficult task. Professional philosophers frequently engage in heated debate concerning the subject matter and the problems that are proper to their discipline. Although their conclusions are often in sharp disagreement with each other, the record of history leaves little room for doubt as to what in the main their ultimate concern has been. Indeed, even the recurrent disputes over the legitimate scope and method of philosophy illustrate the conception of philosophy as a critical commentary on science, and as a continuing interpretation of human experience in the perspective of fresh scientific achievements. It is certainly a striking fact that some of the most brilliant periods in the history of Western philosophy coincide with eras during which frontiers of knowledge were being pushed back vigorously. It is hardly an accident that the flowering of philosophic thought in Greek antiquity came on the heels of fundamental discoveries in mathematics and biology; that the influential speculative and critical philosophies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were produced during the decades which saw the rise and consolidation of modern physical science; or that the ambitious philosophies of evolution in the nineteenth century were developed at a time when knowledge of the human past as well as of the history of other forms of organic life was being rapidly expanded. The adequacy of these various philosophies as systems of warranted truth is a matter of controversy, upon which general agreement is hardly likely in the foreseeable future. These systems nevertheless exhibit the historical role of philosophy as the examination of the significance of science for human weal and woe; and this role is easily discerned in the literature of contemporary philosophy as well. In a readily identifiable sense, all of philosophy has been, and continues to be, a critique of science. And while what is today commonly designated as the philosophy of science is the investigation of a loosely defined set of special problems, the boundaries of the philosophy of science are in fact the boundaries of philosophy itself.

For several decades, however, in Western Europe and America, philosophical reflection on science has been largely directed to logical and methodological issues generated both by the remarkable

theoretical innovations of physical science and by new approaches in the study of human society. These developments have not only upset deeply rooted certainties concerning the structure of the physical universe and the behavior of the human individual; they have also compelled a re-examination of supposedly firm criteria of intelligibility and the grounds of cognitive certitude. Euclidean geometry has been displaced from its age-old status as the only conceivable foundation for a comprehensive theory of nature. A system of chronometry has been introduced which is sharply at variance with customary notions of temporal order. Apparently cogent reasons have been found for curtailing the scope of regulative and constitutive principles, like those of causality and continuity, which have long been regarded as paradigms of absolute universality and necessity. Evidence has accumulated for conceptions concerning the springs of human action which are deeply disturbing to widely held assumptions about the basis of human rationality and responsible action. And comprehensive theoretical explanations of newly discovered phenomena have become current which, despite their enormous success in accounting for detailed facts, postulate an executive order of nature that seems alien to human experience and appears paradoxical even to expertly skilled scientists.

It is not altogether surprising that intellectual changes of the magnitude here only briefly indicated have found interpreters who see in the latest findings of science renewed grounds for comforting superstitions, or who defend in the very name of science itself creeds to which the use of a disciplined but free intelligence is basically hateful. If such interpretations seem plausible to many, this is partly because scientists have in the main failed to clarify for themselves as well as for others the actual content of their new theories and the rationale of their intellectual methods. Indeed, distinguished workers in the sciences have themselves sometimes supplied commentaries on current reorientations in scientific theory that are at best examples of uncontrolled fancy, and are frequently exercises in obscurantism. This situation is not quite as anomalous as it may appear at first glance. To be sure, skill and understanding are at their best, as Santayana noted, when they adorn the same mind. Nor is there much

doubt that perhaps the most illuminating analyses of scientific achievements and procedure have been made by philosophical-minded practicing scientists. What is loosely called "scientific method," however, is generally a habit of workmanship that skilled investigators possess, and not a codified set of principles which they explicitly acknowledge. Those who are successfully engaged in specialized research usually show no serious interest in methodological analysis which does not contribute directly to the solution of specific research tasks. Their philosophy of science is often hardly more than the echo of philosophic ideas uncritically acquired during their early schooling. There is little agreement among scientific workers on the broad significance of their theories or on the logic of their procedure, despite their remarkable virtuosity in handling complex intellectual tools, and in striking contrast to the eventual unanimity which they achieve on solutions for specific technical problems. There are, indeed, no uniform standards of competent workmanship, whether among scientists or professional philosophers, which control the analysis of such matters. There is still lacking a generally adequate technique for unravelling the enormously complex maze of symbolism involved in the construction and the use of scientific theory.

The symbolic nature of scientific theory is certainly not a recent discovery. Nevertheless, the subtle and indirect ways in which theories function as schemata of representation have not been widely noted or appreciated until fairly recently. A century ago, it was common to think of a theory—even a theory in physics—as an inductive generalization derived by abstraction from directly observed occurrences. A theory was assumed to be simply a compact description of regularities that obtain between phenomena. The successful development of theories which ostensibly postulate inherently unobservable entities and processes made evident the superficiality of this account. For a time the view then became prevalent that postulations of "unobservables" are nothing but convenient though fictional modes of speech. This emended version of the "simple description" notion of theory became incredible, however, when impressive experimental evidence was found for the "reality" of molecules, atoms, electrons,

and the like. Many thinkers have therefore concluded that the fundamental theories of modern physics and chemistry are about an order of things and events that are existentially and causally prior to the things and events encountered in daily life.

The unobservable but basic entities of nature, however, ostensibly possess few if any of the traits that characterize the objects of familiar experience. Moreover, they seem in many respects to be incommensurably unlike the latter. The relation of the "world" of gross experience to the "world" disclosed by physics thus became an acute problem. Some writers resolved it by relegating one or the other of these "worlds" to a realm of metaphysical appearance. Others sought to overcome it by construing the postulated scientific objects in terms of the categories of human experience, and thereby clothing the unobservable entities of physics with properties analogous to those distinctive of the human organism. Still others solved it by postulating a progressive evolution or emergence of levels of being. But the proposed solutions raise more issues than they settle; and they are all based on the dubious assumption that each constituent part of a theory is the intellectual image of an identifiable item in the subject matter of inquiry. On this assumption a theory is therefore a description of some fixed realm of ultimate fact. But the assumption simply ignores the complex structure of theoretical symbolism. Those who make this assumption fail to appreciate the flexible uses of theoretical expressions, the variety of special meanings which are associated with them in different contexts of inquiry, the multiple regulative roles which theories play, or the different logical functions which grammatically similar statements may possess. These matters are more fully understood at present. Contemporary philosophy of science has succeeded in dispelling much of the mystery that is produced when the elliptic formulations of mathematical physics are construed in a myopically literal manner.

Indeed, much of the recent literature of the philosophy of science is a self-conscious attempt at articulating modes of symbolic signification, and a search for effective criteria of meaningful discourse. This search is often controlled by the therapeutic objective of eliminating pseudo-problems both within science proper and in the philosophic

interpretations of science. In the pursuit of this objective, variants of Charles Peirce's "pragmatic maxim" for making our ideas clear have played a prominent role. According to that maxim, our conception of an object of thought consists entirely of the "practical" bearings which we suppose that object to have. The adoption of the maxim leads, on the one hand, to the rejection as spurious of many allegedly profound puzzles raised by commentators on science, and, on the other hand, to the detailed study of scientific formulations in terms of the concrete procedures and habits of usage that alone invest them with significance. Peirce himself noted, for example, that the term "force" in physics does not represent a "mysterious entity," as was commonly believed by many of his contemporaries. On the contrary, the term is completely understood when its role in the equations of physics is made explicit, and when the use in inquiry of those equations is indicated. It is therefore absurd to claim, as many eminent scientists have done, that while we may understand the effects of force we do not understand what force itself is. Many thinkers in Europe and America, in many instances without having been exposed to the influence of Peirce's writings, have adopted his maxim in a variety of forms. They have extended the type of analysis he proposed for the notion of force to a large number of other ideas in physics, biology, psychology, and social science. In consequence, fundamental contributions have been made not only to the clarification of specific theoretical concepts, but also to the understanding of the structure and operation of scientific symbolism in general.

It must be acknowledged, however, that oversimplified versions of the Peircean maxim have gained wide currency, and that injudicious use of them has frequently darkened counsel. Many contemporary writers have supposed that a criterion of meaning contains in capsule form the solutions for all mortal ills, and they have in consequence made grotesque claims for their approach to the analysis of scientific discourse. Other writers have espoused simple-minded tests of significance, and have shown themselves insensitive to the influence of context upon the meaning and function of statements. They have thereby been compelled to classify as species of "nonsense" nearly all statements of science. But in spite of the quantity of material,

incompetent, trivial, and irrelevant, that has been published in consequence, there has been substantial achievement as well. In the hands of analysts competently familiar with the actual operations of scientific inquiry and with the role played in it by theoretical constructions, the Peircean maxim in some of its variant forms has undoubtedly been an instrument of genuine illumination.

It is difficult to exaggerate in this connection the far-reaching and salutary influence of the theory of relativity upon current philosophy of science. For the Einsteinian critique of classical mechanics called attention to the importance of construing scientific notions by way of the actual operations which control their range of application; and it made impressively clear that apparently significant statements often possess no physical content, precisely because crucial terms occurring in them are associated with no specified procedures of application. Einstein's analysis also made evident that the construction of a theory involves, among other things, a series of decisions between alternate modes of representing and organizing relevant features of a subject matter—for example, in the case of mechanics, decisions between alternate geometries and alternate chronometries. Such decisions are logically arbitrary, since they are not implied by experimental data; they can nevertheless be evaluated in the light of their effectiveness in systematizing fields of inquiry. Furthermore, the theory of relativity reveals unmistakably that when the range of application of a scientific symbol is enlarged, the symbol may undergo fundamental changes in meaning. This has been the history of such terms as "mass" and "energy" in physics, "species" and "image" in biology and psychology, and "class" and "property" in social science. Subtle analogies may control the process of enlarging the scope of application of a symbol. Nevertheless, it is in general a blunder to interpret the more inclusive use of an expression in terms of its initially more restricted meaning. It is this blunder which underlies much of the alleged "unintelligibility" commonly attributed to modern physics. These methodological observations are, however, pertinent for the understanding not merely of a special physical theory but of all theoretical constructions. They have rendered valuable service to thinkers seeking to develop a generalized account of knowledge that is founded on

the realities of scientific procedure and on the actual character of scientific explanation.

The classical conception of scientific knowledge was formed under the influence of demonstrative geometry as traditionally taught, and rests on three fundamental assumptions: Genuine scientific knowledge is demonstrative knowledge, and science seeks to "save the phenomena" by exhibiting the events and regularities of nature as consequences of universal truths. Secondly, since every demonstration must start from premises which are not themselves demonstrable, there must be transparently luminous universal truths which the intellect can grasp as self-evident. Thirdly, if the particulars of sense are to be truly explained, the basic premises of a science must be necessary truths, which are better known and more certain than anything explained by them. These assumptions have dominated scientific, philosophic, and popular thought since antiquity. For example, it was a widespread supposition a half-century ago that the axioms of Newtonian mechanics conform to the classical requirements for the first principles of a science. The discovery soon thereafter that the Newtonian system is not fully adequate to the facts therefore appeared to a number of commentators as a symptom of "the bankruptcy of science."

Many thinkers continue to demand of genuine knowledge the characteristics postulated by the classical ideal of science. The first requirement in that ideal undoubtedly does represent a permanent though partial objective of scientific research. But the remaining components in that ideal are not, and cannot be, achieved by the actual methods of any positive inquiry. Contemporary analyses of the kind previously mentioned have shown, for example, that a theory is never uniquely determined by any set of empirical data, however numerous and varied these may be. Alternate explanations are always possible in principle; and the supposition that a unique explanatory principle is embedded in the phenomena, and shines forth to the attentive intellect, is therefore radically mistaken. It follows that scientific research is not a passive beholding and codifying of self-evident structures in things. On the contrary, the construction of theories, like the construction of works of art, makes

serious demands upon powers of imagination and invention. Scientists have repeatedly noted the "free creation of concepts" embodied in their theoretical foundations. As one of them has remarked, the work of Newton, Leverrier, Maxwell, and Hertz "was an expression of their personality just as surely as the work of Giotto, of Shakespeare, or of Bach." This does not mean that the scientist is a demiurge who creates the things he studies. It does mean that an explanatory theory is but one among several possible techniques for representing and analyzing systematically an indefinitely large set of specific processes. When a scientific theory is construed in terms of its functions in inquiry, the supposition that the fundamental principles of a science can be established by appeals to self-evidence is thus not even plausible. Indeed, the traditional conception of the relation between a theory and the facts it explains must be partially reversed. A theory does make "intelligible" the occurrences of nature by indicating their interrelations. Nevertheless, the theory is itself "intelligible" not because of its self-luminous necessity and certainty, but because of the manner in which it analyzes and organizes the concrete facts of experience. In short, abstract theory and matters of observation mutually clarify each other. If it is a task of science to "save the phenomena" by making them intelligible in the light of a theory, it is equally its task to "save the abstracta" by making them intelligible in the light of the phenomena they co-ordinate. Maxwell's electro-magnetic theory, for example, explains a host of electrical, magnetic, and optical phenomena. But the content of the theory becomes clear only when it is understood how its equations are employed for directing specific inquiries and for interpreting matters of observation.

One important outcome of this altered view of scientific knowledge is a correspondingly altered conception of the grounds of scientific certitude. Neither the first principles of a science nor the formulations of concrete happenings are incorrigible. And if the findings of science are reliable, they are reliable neither because they follow from necessarily true basic premises nor because they are derivable from indubitable data of observation. What does support claims to warranted knowledge is the use of a general method (or

logic) for establishing a particular claim. Inquiries into different subject matters employ different special techniques of investigation; but underlying them all is a common pattern of procedure for gathering, interpreting and evaluating evidence. A distinctive feature of this method is its doubly self-corrective character. No conclusion of an inquiry is exempt from the challenge of further inquiry, provoked perhaps by doubts raised because of new theoretical constructions or fresh experimental data. And every schema for evaluating the weight of evidence is subject to revision, if further analysis should reveal that the use of a given schema leads to conclusions which are too frequently undependable. The quest for certainty is perhaps an inherent aspect of the scientific enterprise. But current clarifications of the self-corrective method of science have made evident that scientific certitude cannot be equated with infallibility. The reliability of a scientific conclusion, it is now clear, is a function of the thoroughness with which it has been tested by methods that on repeated application yield conclusions in good agreement with observed fact. While any given claim to knowledge may be mistaken, some claims are better warranted than others; but the warrant itself ultimately derives from the character of the general policy which science adopts for evaluating all claims.

Considerations such as these have contributed to the formation of a naturalistic conception of human reason and scientific intelligence. Scientific knowledge does not depend on the possession of an esoteric capacity for grasping the necessary structure of some superior reality, nor does it require modes of warranting beliefs which are discontinuous with operations of thought, identifiable and effective in the ordinary affairs of human life. The achievements of science are the products of a co-operative social enterprise, which has refined and extended skills encountered in the meanest employments of the human intellect. The principles of human reason, far from representing the immutable traits of all possible being, are socially cultivated standards of competent intellectual workmanship. The life of reason as embodied in the community of scientific effort is thus a pattern of life that generates an autonomous yet controlling ideal. That ideal requires disciplined dedication without servitude to any

ultimate authority, imposes responsibility for performance upon individual judgment but demands responsiveness to the criticism of others, and calls for adherence to a tradition of workmanship without commitment to any system of dogma. To many commentators, the ideals realized in the enterprise of science are also the ideals which are indispensable to the successful operation of any society of free men. Many thinkers, indeed, like John Dewey in America, have based their hopes for the future of mankind upon the extension of the habits of scientific intelligence to every stratum of communal life and to every form of social organization.

Philosophers often suppose themselves to possess avenues to truth —truth which is not accessible to the empirically controlled analytic methods of the sciences. Certainly no shortage exists today of oracular metaphysical pronouncements on the spiritual foundations of the universe or on the ultimate nature and destiny of human effort. It is not difficult to perceive the reasons why, in a period of acute social tension such as ours, there should be large audiences for philosophies that thrive on obscurantism and which see the shape of things through a glass clouded by anguish and fear. To those who seek from philosophy assurance that life is worth living or that the universe is mindful of human aspirations, contemporary philosophy of science has on the whole nothing significant to say. On the other hand, it has had an unmistakable influence on the development of new approaches in Anglo-American psychology and social science; and it has made an impress on a substantial majority of Anglo-American philosophers, even when their chief concerns are only peripherally related to the analysis of science. A comparison of current philosophical writing in English-speaking countries with similar publications a half-century ago, reveals a greater responsiveness today to the requirements of clarity and cogency than was customary then. There is now a diminished tendency to fall back on a priori methods for settling issues that can be resolved, if they can be resolved at all, only by experimental trial and factual study. There is less reliance today on outmoded conceptions of scientific procedure in discussions on the theory of knowledge. There is a greater awareness at present of the dangers implicit in using debatable or

half-digested conclusions of factual inquiry as foundation stones for comprehensive systems of political and ethical theory. And greater caution is now practiced when current findings about physical or biological processes are invoked to decide issues in moral and aesthetic analysis.

These are in the main negative achievements for which contemporary philosophy of science is in part responsible. But it can also be credited with an invaluable positive achievement, quite apart from its detailed contributions to the clarification of scientific procedures. For it has given vigorous support and expression to an attitude, at once critical and experimental, toward the perennial as well as the current issues of human life; and it has thereby been a champion of the central values of liberal civilization. The basis for a general outlook on the place of man in nature is supplied by detailed knowledge of the structure of things supplied by the special sciences—an outlook that contemporary philosophy of science has helped to articulate and defend. In the perspective of that outlook, the human creature is not an autonomous empire in the vast entanglement of events and forces constituting the human environment. Nevertheless, no antecedent limits can be set to the power of scientific reason to acquire theoretical mastery over natural and social processes. Every doctrine which pretends to set such limits contains within itself the seeds of intolerance and repression. Moreover, in the perspective of that scientifically grounded outlook, human aspirations are expressions of impulses and needs which, whether these be native or acquired, constitute the ultimate point of reference for every justifiable moral judgment. The adequacy of such aspirations must therefore be evaluated in terms of the structures of human capacities and the order of human preferences. Accordingly, though the forces of nature may one day extinguish the human scene, those forces do not define valid human ideals, and they do not provide the measure of human achievement. But an indispensible condition for the just definition and the realization of those ideals is the employment and extension of the method of intelligence embodied in the scientific enterprise. A judicious confidence in the power of reason to ennoble the human estate may seem shallow to an age in which, despite the dominant

position in it of scientific technology, there is a growing and pervasive distrust of the operations of free intelligence. It may indeed be the case that the temper of mind essential to the exercise of such intelligence has no immediate social future. But the cultivation of that intellectual temper is a fundamental condition for every liberal civilization. By making manifest the nature of scientific reason and the grounds for a continued confidence in it, contemporary philosophy of science has been a servant of men's noblest and most relevant ideals.

Katherine Anne Porter

A BRIGHT PARTICULAR FAITH

A.D. 1700

A portrait of Cotton Mather

In her sixteenth year of marriage, Abigail, wife of Cotton Mather, the brilliant and celebrated Boston minister, miscarried of her eleventh child. Her physicians pronounced it a false conception. Mather at once observed a day of humiliation in his study, inquiring of his soul if he had ever troubled the Church with any false conceptions of doctrine, that this calamity should be visited upon him.

Abigail was dangerously ill, and her husband set aside a day of fasting and prayer for her. But he was cold in his devotions and it occurred to him sadly that a man cannot believe what he will, when he will. He reassured himself by saying that he feared her death so terribly he could not pray for her life. He brooded at length on the inconveniences of a motherless family—five of their children had survived—the coming perils of his own wifeless state, and in his brooding he was buffeted with impure thoughts, his mind dwelling with persistent carnality on Abigail. He was disconcerted and ashamed, gave it up, and set another day for fasting, by way of cleansing his imagination of Abigail the woman before he should pray for Abigail the soul.

He knelt by her bedside with his children present, and there, he

records in his diary, he felt the rays of a particular faith, a definite belief that she would recover. Later he returned to his study, and this particular faith was intensified by intimate assurances from Heaven that she would not die at present. He resolved, in writing, that if the Lord would spare his Good Thing he would be wise and chaste and holy in his conversation with her ever afterward. He hastened to tell Abigail the happy news that she was to be spared to him.

She grew worse immediately. On the next Sunday she appeared to be dying, and the physician was sent for out of the public assembly. Mather's faith suffered a shock, but the fit passed over.

That evening he went to bed and slept soundly, but they called him up at midnight, saying her hour was near. He sat praying the rest of the night. Next morning he felt confident his prayers were being heard, for Abigail still breathed. He set himself now to wrestle in earnest, and his wife's deathbed was transformed into a battlefield where Mather fought another of his distinguished engagements with God.

Terrible complications set in: fever, shivering fits, salivation; and Abigail lay silent, neither living nor dying. Mather saw that one fast would not do, and he devoted three days to her cause. On a Tuesday he prayed for her again, but his mind wandered off to other affairs, and having established the precious necessary mood of intimacy with God he took advantage of it to pray for the political situation in England. His old enemy, Joseph Dudley, head of a powerful party entirely opposed to Mather, had recently been made Governor, and Mather rightly feared the outcome. It proved, he admitted, a day of no great enjoyments.

As if to rebuke his straying thoughts, Abigail grew worse the following day, and fell into a heavy coma. This was a severe trial, but Mather reflected that he had held out under it stoutly, which would in time make the certain blessing the more blessed. He prepared several petitions to be presented to Queen Anne, and devoted another day to Abigail, praying meanwhile for strength to preach before the new Governor the next morning. He was writing and sending complaints against Dudley secretly to England, but he planned to gain Dudley's friendship to all appearances; and God,

who inspired him in his campaign, would not, he hoped, allow his plan to fail.

On this day of prayer his familiar shining angel appeared: that baroque being who brought, on several occasions, the most consoling messages of encouragement: and assured him that Abigail would not die; further, that the Mather Family should enjoy some particular glory because of this sad experience. He opened his psalm book and sang, and the pages fell open of themselves infallibly renewing the promises he had wrested from God. This heartened him so much, he preached with amazing vigor and success before Dudley. He described a good man to the Governor and the congregation, with a wealth of adroit touches which formed a flattering but fairly recognizable portrait of Dudley himself . . .

Abigail sank lower into darkness; no prayer and no human hand could raise her. Mather wrote in his diary that her death was evil enough, but he in it dreaded most of all the blow to his particular faith, a defeat too personal for him to endure. A note of arrogance crept into his prayers: he demanded the life of Abigail as proof of his own ambassadorship between heaven and earth. His wife would not flatter his hopes. She contented herself with thanking him for his courtesy and attention, and told him she was grateful for his goodness to her when she was no longer of any service to him.

In the sixth week Mather observed another fast for Abigail, and against the smallpox, and in behalf of New England now going to war against the French. Abigail took a turn for the worse, an extreme suffering came upon her; he knelt by her to watch her die. She rallied and her husband kept his seventh fast for her. He was almost wearied out and half defeated. For the first time, he verbally offered her to the Lord and submitted to all the sorrowful consequences of her death. When he rose from his knees he felt certain that she would live.

His mind at rest for the moment, he prepared the sermon he had preached for Dudley, and gave it to be printed and distributed. He also tossed off a little sermon on Sins of Omission, and certain members of his congregation had it published.

Abigail lay quietly. She could not die and she would not try to live.

The physicians pronounced her illness mortal. Mather kept a vigil for her. He lay on the floor and wept, so thinly clothed that the hard floor hurt his tender bones and he complained of this as he cried to God to spare him Abigail. This time, as if his suffering bones had touched divine compassion, Abigail rallied a little. He renewed his supplications. She failed again. Once more he was called out of his sleep: "I am kept up all night that I may see her die, and therewith the terrible death of my prayer and faith." Yet, when again he attempted to resign her, some spark of hope refused to be quenched and he comforted himself with the thought that God had sent this affliction upon Abigail for the express purpose of trying his own faith.

On a Sunday towards the end of August, after preaching and praying in the morning, he was sitting alone in his house when he received a ghostly intimation that Heaven would speak to him in a very familiar manner, if he would wait in a suitable posture. A voice said to him: "Go into your great Chamber and I will speak with you."

He went in and cast himself upon the floor, far away from the noisy children, away from the speechless Abigail. He wept exorbitantly and confessed his own loathsomeness: he was worthy only to be thunder-struck into dust and ashes. After a short period of self-torture, the ritualistic frenzy came, his tears poured in a flood upon the floor, and he talked aloud in a broken voice:

"And now my Father is going to tell, what he will do for me; my Father loves me, and will fill me with his love, and will bring me to everlasting life. My Father will make me a Chosen Vessel, to do good in the world. My Father will yet use me to glorify his Christ, and my Opportunities, my precious Opportunities to do so, shall be after a most astonishing manner continued and multiplied. Particularly, my treatise of *The Triumphs of Christianity*, my Father will send his holy angels to look after it, and it shall not be lost." (This manuscript had been mysteriously misplaced and it was causing him great distress.) "The condition of my dear Consort, my Father will give me to see his wonderful favor in it. My Father will be a Father to my children, too: He will provide for them, and they shall every one of them serve Him throughout the ages."

He rose calm and refreshed, a heavenly impression upon his soul.

A public day of prayer relieved him momentarily from the duty of keeping a private one; he kept a day of thanksgiving instead, because Abigail still lingered, after fourteen weeks. The day before this thanksgiving, Abigail had sunk into apathy and seemed again to be dying. Still, he kept his day, and resolutely thanked God for all; and his faith that she would live revived once more.

August and September passed, and Abigail kept to her bed, with alternations of energy and collapse. Mather began to be troubled by a recurrent thought. Maybe he had been inattentive to the precise meaning of that particular faith he had cherished in the matter. He now persuaded himself that her many crises had passed immediately after each day of prayer he offered for her; and it came to him that the Lord was keeping her with them to test their prayer and faith with patience and to teach them resignation. "It may be, after the Lord has given me demonstrations, of his being loth to deny me anything that I importunately ask of him, and therefore doth one month after another delay the thing I fear: yet I must at last encounter the Death which I have deprecated, when both my wife and I shall be better prepared for it."

He doubted that he had rightly interpreted the messages he had received. He had believed that God meant in the end to do him the enormous favor of restoring Abigail. It now occurred to him that this may have been a hasty, a short-sighted conclusion. Maybe, in a word, it was better that Abigail should die: "The Lord may have blessings in store for me, and my poor family, beyond anything I can at present imagine, or indeed, would be willing to imagine."

Abigail's sickness prevented him from accepting an important invitation to preach out of town. He accepted this rebuke from Heaven with a number of useful reflections. He was not altogether forsaken, he assured himself: several towns invited him later, and he was able to fill his engagements with great success. In the first part of October he conducted a public fast at South Church, and wrestled with the Lord in prayer for near two hours together. He noted that by some particular dispensation of Providence he was much in demand for such occasions.

Abigail had lain for twenty weeks. She was now an uncomplaining

shadow but still she could not die. Symptoms of tuberculosis set in. Mather kept another vigil for her. He was so tired he could not keep awake. Disheartened, he left the case with God, and opened his grandfather Richard Mather's Bay Psalmbook to sing a verse or two. The pages fell open at the lines:

"And there was not among their tribes
A feeble person told."

"Lord," he thought, "This won't be fulfilled until the resurrection of the dead. The tribes of the raised will not have one feeble person among them!" It was an omen that Abigail must die. He said, "Lord, Thy will be done," and slept.

The next night, Abigail had a strange dream. A solemn man appeared in her chamber, accompanied by a woman so pitiably wretched and meager that Abigail praised God she was not yet so badly off as this. The man proposed a remedy for her relief. For the terrible pain in her breast, he said, "Let them cut the warm wool from a living sheep, and apply it warm to the grieved pain. Next, for the salivation, take a tankard of spring water, and over the fire dissolve an agreeable quantity of mastics and of gum isinglass: drink this liquor now and then to strengthen the glands, which ought to have been done a great while ago."

Her principal physician saw no harm in trying this remedy. To the surprise of everyone, she rose in a few days from her bed, and came into her husband's study, where they knelt and prayed together. For a time she improved and Mather turned with relief to his interrupted literary activities. The first copies of his masterpiece, the *Magnalia Christi Americana*, had lately come over from England, and the sight of it consoled and repaid him for all his long privations.

In November, Abigail took once more to her bed. A serious epidemic of smallpox had broken out in Boston. Mather wrote a pamphlet for the comfort of the plague sufferers, and distributed it himself. Immune as he was, from a mild attack of smallpox in his youth, he visited constantly in the foul-smelling sealed chambers of the sick, and carried the contagion home to his children.

Little Nibby came down, and then young Increase, then Nancy, and their nurse. The house was in dreadful disorder, and Mather in

desperation essayed a day of fasting as a cure for all. Closing himself in, he tried to escape the confusion of drugs and disease. It was not to be. His study was the warmest and most comfortable room in the house, and the winter cold could not be kept out of the drafty nursery. With a groan he surrendered his refuge to the children.

"God sanctifies this to me, to humble me," he wrote in his diary, "for not serving Him as I should have done in my study: which provokes Him to chase me out of it."

Warm and sheltered by three thousand books, the children lay blinded and sore and wretched. They cried for their mother who did not answer, being now shielded in indifference to this world. They cried for relief and comfort from their father, and the harassed man came a dozen times a day to pray with them. Freely and fervently and anxiously on each occasion he implored God to take them all if it pleased his will. They began to recover.

Abigail's sudden decline had been a shock, and Mather was stricken with tenderness for her. He spent most of his time in her room, praying for her "as agreeably" as he could. He no longer measured his strength against the determined assault of death, but prepared her for the end. He would entertain her for hours at a time with descriptions of heaven, assuring her that she would most certainly go there. She made no further resistance, and on Tuesday, the first of December 1701, the agony set in, there could be no doubt of it this time.

Mather wrote: "The desire of my eyes is this day to be taken from me." She remained conscious, prayed a little, said she was happy to die. Her husband at this late moment was touched with a painful doubt: he implored her to tell him faithfully what fault she had seen in him that she might have wished away. He could not let her go without asking what she had really thought of him. He had never inquired before. Abigail did not fail him. She answered that she had not seen any fault in him: "and that God had made his conversation exceedingly serviceable to her, to bring her nearer to Himself."

This perfectly reserved answer satisfied him for the present, but he wondered at it afterward, he said. Two hours before her death he knelt by her, took her hands, and made a ceremony of relinquishment:

"With her then in my hands, I solemnly and sincerely gave her up to the Lord: and in token of my real resignation, I gently put her out of my hands, and laid away a most lovely hand, resolving that I would never touch it any more."

Abigail submitted, and though she had called for him often before she did not ask for him again. Years after he evoked and re-wrote this scene many times, with a great appreciation of its dramatic rightness, and a pleased sense of his own handsome part in it. Abigail had been a good habit with him, the harmless solvent of his carnal needs, a shield against sin, the Good Thing given from the Lord. It was fitting that he should be prostrated by her loss, and he was prostrated for several hours. She spoke her last words to her Father, "Heaven, heaven will make amends for all."

Mather wrote in his diary: "She lived with me, just as many years as she had lived in the world before she came to me, with an addition of the seven months wherein her dying languishments were taking her from me": thus did the clock in his brain tick away time: "When I had been married to her just sixteen years . . . God began to take her from me. I said then to my father, 'I seem to feel in my mind, the bodings of a dark cloud hanging over my family.' The cloud came on, and now, see what was in it!"

On the Friday following Abigail was given a very honorable funeral. It was socially as distinguished as the wedding had been: which Mather described as the most famous wedding ever seen in that part of the world. Mather set himself the task of glorifying Christ in his affliction, and distributed certain of his religious pamphlets among the hundred friends who had taken turns in watching at the bedside. To each copy he attached a poem he had written for the occasion.

He fasted and prayed the day after the funeral. Five days later he preached a sermon about the prophet Ezekiel's wife. He was touched with a wonderful demonstration from the Lord of the love his congregation bore him. The people were planning to build a costly tomb for Abigail and her five children . . .

Now he had time to pause and reflect. He perceived that the astonishing sting in his wife's death was the miscarriage of his

particular faith. That was the intolerable affront that wiped out his personal grief. He tried to arrange his memories of her. There is very little of Abigail in his diary. She sits perpetually in shadow, hands folded over her enlarging womb. There is very little record of her in the social life of the times, though she was beautiful, wealthy, and of good family. She went very seldom with him to the many dinners given in the houses of their friends. Other women attended; even Hannah Sewall, who bore fourteen children, and yet had time and energy to visit about with her husband, to take trips to the country to eat cherries and raspberries, to assist at births, or special meetings and fasts. Rarely Abigail.

Mather made no comment during her lifetime on her temperament, nor hint of her personal appearance beyond a generalised reference to her beauty, and coy hints as to the carnal charms of her person. After her death, he gradually realised her as a separate personality, and, released from the necessity for restraint, he freed his long-bound thoughts from this marriage as death freed his body. Almost overnight, he became a relieved and thankful widower.

He saw clearly that his deepest prayers had been truly answered. If Abigail had lived, she must have continued an invalid, in continual languor and weakness and sorrow. He could not help commending himself for having endured so cheerfully all the fatigues of her long suffering; indeed she had praised him herself, in an oblique way: "I shall make you all weary," she said, during the last days, and added at once, knowing her husband must instantly take everything to himself, "I don't mean you, Mr. Mather!" He remembered this now with self-congratulations. He reflected that his own health must have suffered if he had run the venture of sleeping with her: undoubtedly he would have gone into a consumption, and the children, thus deprived of their main parent, would have received bad educations. His memories ran footloose: then, too, she was of a melancholy temper. She had wept for months when her father married a second time, though the marriage was a desirable one. Her youngest brother, carrying several hundred pounds of Mather's money, had fallen into the hands of the French; she had been inconsolable, not for the money but for her brother. Her second and favorite brother

had gone to London, sick, hoping to work a cure by the sea voyage; he came to say good-bye to her, and she bade him farewell quietly enough, but after he was gone "she broke out in a more than ordinary passion and agony and said, that she desired God would never let her live to hear of the death of that young man!" The brother had died, and everyone had been at great pains to conceal the event from her. Mather recalled too that her elder brother was "a profane and sottish fellow," a disgrace to his family. She died without knowing this. If she had lived to learn these things, manifestly his own position would have been insupportable.

He sat day after day with gathering thankfulness reviewing all the probabilities of his misfortune if Abigail had not died. The assured permanence of her absence was a blessing, even though tendered in such a disconcerting form. Little by little the idea grew within him that death and Abigail had been secretly, firmly allied against him. He perceived with astonishment that he had not fought the will of God, but her will, in her death. She had defeated him, had over-ruled his prayers with her own. Chagrin changed to definite resentment. He repented of his prayers for her life, his resentment included her very family to whom he felt himself still bound by the tenuous threads of this dissolved marriage. He had always hated them, and they hated him; and this hatred was never softened in that generation. He decided almost at once to marry again. He had, in fact, several months before Abigail's death, cast a discreet but intensely wishful eye on a witty and light-hearted young Gentlewoman whom he now hoped to make the second Mrs. Mather . . .

Children are the most embarrassingly observant of all animals. Nancy, having fallen about this time into convulsions and a malignant fever, lay speechless all one day. Her father fasted, and made a prayer resigning the child, and prayed for an easy and speedy death for her. In the evening she suddenly revived and remarked with some spirit: "I heard my father give me away today, but I shall not die this time, for all that!"

James Thomas Flexner

FIRST PAINTERS OF AN EMERGING NATION

Since they suffered no "brain-washing" in mid-ocean, the first settlers of the land that became the United States brought with them into what they called "this most howling wilderness" the beliefs they had imbibed in the tight-hedged fields and venerable cities of Europe. Strange on a distant shore, sick for home, they labored to build around themselves the semblance of familiar things.

During the seventeenth century, the majority of the immigrants came from England's western counties where there persisted a medieval painting style already out of date in London. On the new soil, this manner flowered almost instantly into a minor masterpiece, *Mrs. Freake and Baby Mary* (Figure 1). In its flat pattern-making, its even lighting, its loving concern with detail, the picture resembles the miniatures with which monks had once decorated manuscripts. Yet the artist expressed what he himself felt: the tenderness of motherhood, and an almost wistful pleasure in the elegance of the world. Be not surprised that the early pioneers dressed in laces! Although they struggled with the multiple problems of a wild environment, although they worshiped God with the profound ardor of

religious exiles, when the time came to dress up they did so with hungry enthusiasm.

Unsuited to America, the medieval manner flowered only for a moment. Practical men engaged in subduing a continent needed an art less given to symbols, more capable of depicting their individual aspirations and the vitality of the world they knew. Inevitably they turned to the baroque style then dominant throughout the Western world. That their sources of information were inadequate—engravings, the work of an occasional very inferior European painter who came to these shores—encouraged naturally gifted artists to improvise with crude but authentic power.

During the 1720's, the first recognizable American school flourished in New York. That colony had originally been settled by Holland and, although the English were now in possession, the great estates which had been granted in the Dutch manner to the overlordship of "patroons" still remained. Thus the artists who have been called "the Patroon Painters" served a prosperous society, aristocratic in organization, yet less familiar with European salons than with Indian council fires. To reveal these unconventional grandees, unconventional artists practiced New World variations of upper-class Old World styles.

Sir Godfrey Kneller, the international master of glitter, who had the most fashionable business in London, had depicted two children of the mighty Sackville family playing with a deer on an ornate terrace. When he painted a boy of the American De Peyster family (Figure 4), a Patroon Painter used an engraving after this picture as a starting point, but simplified the multitudinous forms into a few strong shapes covered with a few strong colors. A drawing-room metaphor was transmuted into a forest vision.

Each of the Patroon Painters practiced his own version of a basically common style. In depicting a young lady of the Van Rensselaer family, one anonymous artist moved almost altogether into fantasy, creating a wild abstraction of a human face; arms and hands shaped not by nature but the artist's feeling for design; and draperies that, independently of breeze, swirl into unnaturalistic, vital, harmonious dance (Figure 2). At the other temperamental extreme was the painter

of Mrs. Leonard Gansevoort, who designed a two-dimensional image which, despite distortions of drawing, is calmly monumental in the inevitability of its forms (Figure 5).

Lacking the poetry of the Patroon Painters, who transmuted elegant transatlantic sources into dream, the artists of colonies other than New York were often stumped by a fundamental disagreement between their own point of view and that of their patrons. In the early eighteenth century, provincial insecurity made most prosperous Americans wish to be portrayed as something resembling English lords; but the artists, most of whom practiced in addition to portraiture such trades as coach and sign painting, belonged to the artisan class which had increasingly less sympathy with either European or native aristocratic ideas. Their own imaginations untouched, they slavishly copied from foreign prints conceptions, costumes, and accessories, concocting pictures that had to be dull. All the while they yearned for opportunities to paint faces as realistically as they knew how, and, when the rare opportunities came, they created their best work.

Anne Pollard claimed to be more than a hundred years old and insisted that when "a bouncing girl" she had run ahead of her companions to be the first who set foot on the territory where the city of Boston subsequently grew. An artist whose routine portraits were no more than routine was commissioned to record Mrs. Pollard, not in a flattering likeness but as an historical document, and suddenly his dull brush became inspired. The resulting canvas (Figure 3) makes us think of modern impressionist painting. Design and visual truth merge into a strange image that, although every detail is distorted, seems more real than reality.

That immigrants reacted very similarly to native painters is revealed by the experiences of Gustavus Hesselius, a Swedish artist of some training who reached America in 1712. Descended from a long line of Low-Church ministers, he was uneasy with the aristocratic pretensions of Philadelphia merchants and Maryland planters; his conventional portraits are feeble. Very different are the likenesses he painted of Indian chiefs at a conference during which the Pennsylvanians tricked them out of a vast quantity of land. Expressing with

all the skill and sincerity he could muster exactly what he saw and felt, Hesselius created in *Lapowinsa* (Figure 6) a moving picture of a doomed race.

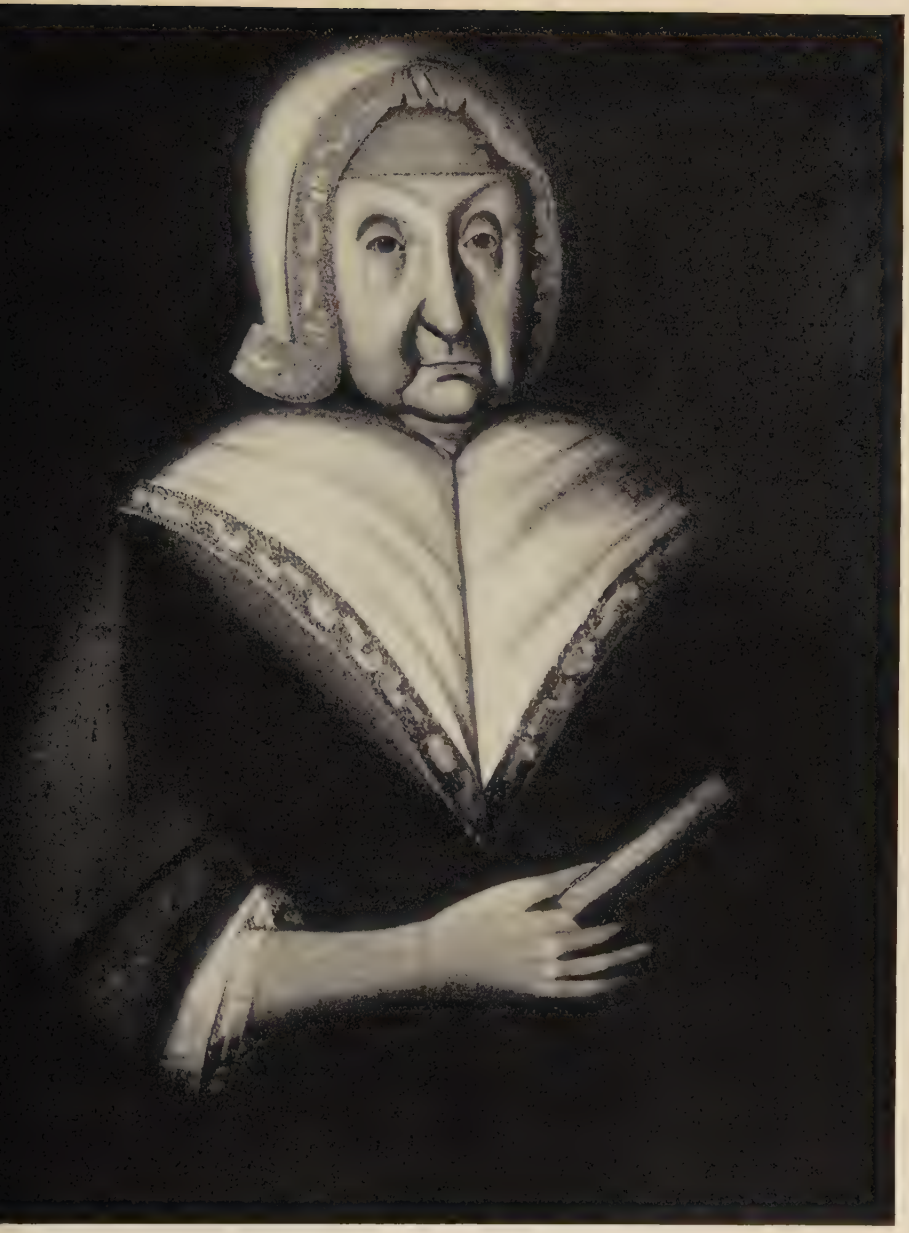
The spirit of the Patroon Painters reappeared during the 1740's in the work of Robert Feke, a well-born New Yorker whose taste ran naturally to elegance. In the studio of John Smibert, a second-rate Scotch painter recently arrived from London, Feke learned how a purposeful handling of light and shadow can make a flat image seem round; he became the first native artist to achieve a semblance of weight and depth. Yet he sought effects very different from his master's. Since he possessed a much more poetic sense of color, his canvases gleam with all the freshness of a gentle spring morning; and, in the traditional American manner, he simplified complicated shapes into a few strong and basic forms (Figure 8). Mrs. Josiah Martin's expansive skirt, strengthened and shaped by the legs beneath it, is a variegated but solid base for the cone of her torso enclosed in the cone of her arms. The design rises majestically to a head in which the features are painted less for individual resemblance than to echo and complete the masses below. Such paintings appeal especially to admirers of the cubist element in modern art.

Feke died when a relatively young man, and his successor as the leading portraitist of the northern Colonies expressed a very different spirit. A tailor's son who had painted houses before he advanced himself to easel pictures, Joseph Badger made no concessions to elegance. He was the first American to achieve wide acceptance for likenesses that were completely realistic in conception. Although the social equal of Feke's resplendent ladies, Mrs. John Edwards (Figure 7) was happy to be painted, not as an aging belle, but as a shrewd and homely matriarch whose primary concern was household generalship. This reflected a change in American thought that was to bring, in fifteen years, a war of independence. At every level of society the provincialism typical of colonial lands was ebbing. No longer eager to pose as lords, Americans were proud to be themselves. A new unity of point of view now existed between the artisan-painters and their sitters; this made for strength of result. Badger's technique was crude—certainly Mrs. Edwards' long body never sprouted so small

1. [illegible] MRS. FREAKE AND BABY MARY (c. 1674) 42½" x 36"

Collection. Collotype copyright 1946 by the New York Graphic Society, Greenwich, Connecticut

2. *Anonymous:* GIRL OF THE VAN RENSSELAER FAMILY (c. 1720–30) 45" x 34 3/4"
Present owner unknown. Photograph courtesy Frick Art Reference Library, New York



3. *Anonymous:* ANNE POLLARD (1721) *28 3/4" x 24"*
Collection Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston

4. *Anonymous:* DE PEYSTER BOY WITH DEER (c. 1728) *56" x 47"*
Collection The New-York Historical Society, New York

5. *Anonymous:* MRS. LEONARD GANSEVOORT (c. 1725) 47 1/2" × 35 1/2"
Private Collection

6. *Gustavus Hesselius:* LAPOWINSA (1735) 33 x 25
Collection Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

7. *Joseph Badger* MRS. JOHN EDWARDS (before 1765) *36 1/2" x 25 1/2"*
Collection Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

8. *Robert Feke:* MRS. JOSIAH MARTIN (c. 1748–50) $50\frac{1}{2}'' \times 40\frac{1}{2}''$
Collection The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit

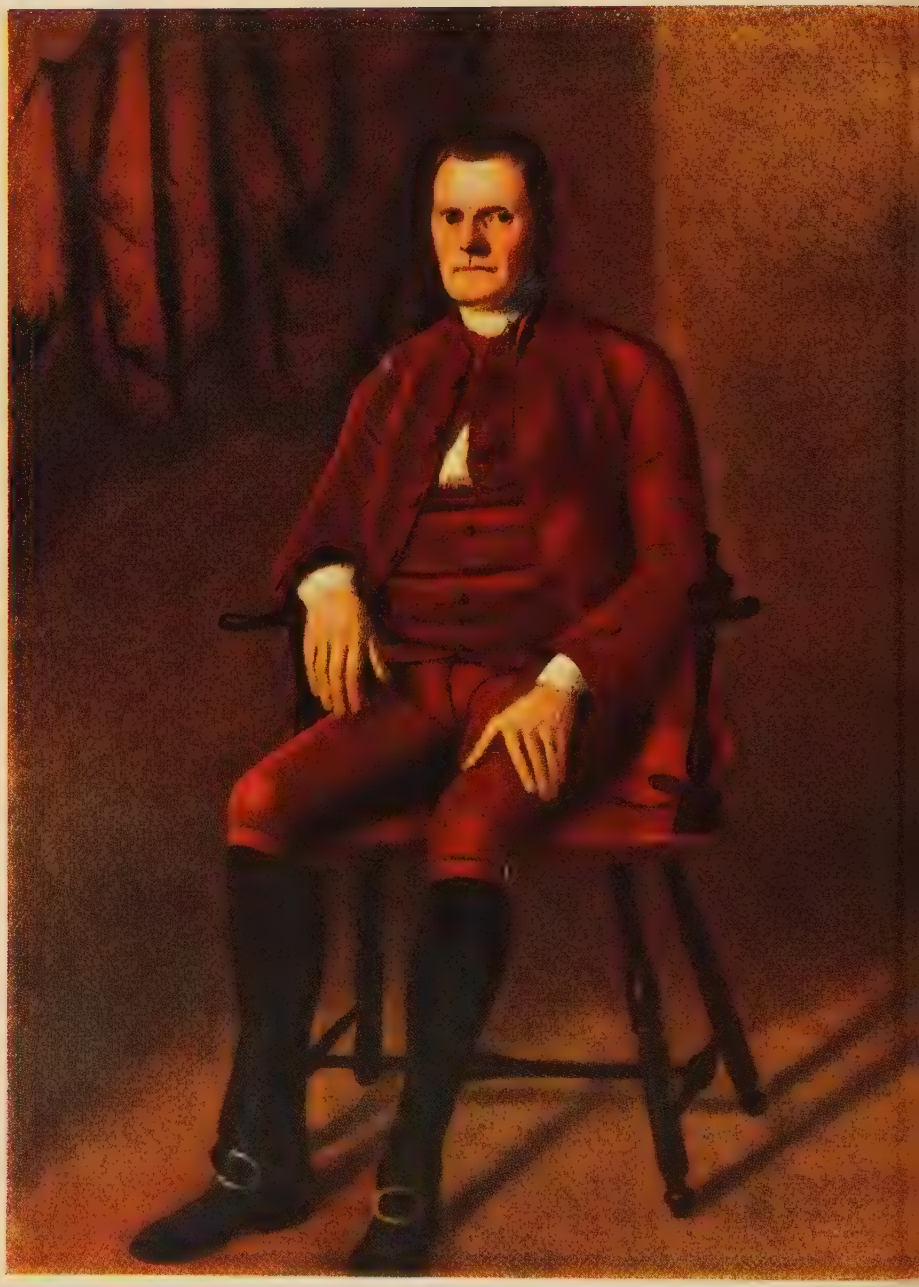
9. *John Singleton Copley:* BOY WITH SQUIRREL (c. 1765) *30 1/4" × 25"*
Privately owned. On loan to Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

10. *Benjamin West:* DEATH OF SOCRATES (c. 1756) *Detail shown, complete picture 34" × 41"*

Collection Mrs. Thomas H. A. Stites, Nazareth, Pennsylvania. Photograph courtesy Frick Art Refer Library, New York

11 *John Singleton Copley*: MR. AND MRS. THOMAS MIFFLIN (c. 1773) 60½ × 48

Collection Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia



12. *Ralph Earl:* ROGER SHERMAN (c. 1775–77) *64 5/8" x 49 3/4"*
Collection Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven

a head—yet the portrait breathes a sincerity, a complete conviction, which makes it, in its own way, an authentic work of art.

In America as well as England, portraiture dominated, yet artists painted every type of picture known in the Western world. When during the 1750's a teen-age boy named Benjamin West startled the wilderness city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with proficient likenesses, a gunsmith asked him why he did not paint noble subjects like the death of Socrates. Having ascertained who Socrates was, West, without the least hesitation, imagined the scene. The wild result, in itself a "primitive" masterpiece, could be considered a milestone in the development of world art (Figure 10).

In 1759, West crossed the ocean, the first American-born artist to achieve personal contact with the great traditions of painting. He met at Rome the initiators—men from many nations—of the neoclassical style which was to sweep Europe and become, under the leadership of Jacques Louis David, the official art of Napoleon's Empire. While Louis XVI still reigned in France, West moved on to London, and, settling there, he painted to tremendous applause canvases which were, so French historians state, the first consistent exemplars of the new style. Engravings after the American's pictures helped sow the seeds of neoclassicism everywhere; he anticipated David by ten or twelve years. West had learned much in Europe, yet he was following a trail he had discerned in the primeval forest.

Born in the same year as West—1738—John Singleton Copley also became a professional portraitist when still in his teens. He combined what information he could get from European books and engravings with the techniques of his fellow Americans, but his genius was so great that he soon left far behind all sources available to him in Boston. He was forced to break his own way to the higher slopes of art. Through aching personal experimentation he learned how to make color contribute to a greater solidity than he had seen in any picture, how to compose objects in depth, how to solve a thousand problems which stood between him and the visually naturalistic images he desired. In the spirit of the later French novelist Flaubert, who said that a writer should describe a horse so that it could be distinguished from every other horse in Paris, Copley

labored to make each piece of lace a portrait: it could be picked out from all the other lace in New England.

Copley's attitude towards humanity, even more than Badger's, was that of the American Revolution. Although he loved fine clothes for the sensuous pleasure they gave him, as a student of character he was entirely unconcerned with rank: an artisan was a nobler man than a king if his personality were more admirable. When the successful silversmith Paul Revere, who was to take an important part in the revolt against England, posed not in the gentlemanly costume he wore in the evenings, but preferred to go down to posterity in his work clothes—when Copley painted him with the tools of his trade around him, admiring the work of his own hands—sitter and artist collaborated on a strong picture that was a revolutionary document.

Carried by an American admirer to London, Copley's *Boy with Squirrel* (Figure 9) found its way to Sir Joshua Reynolds' studio, but not before it had passed through so many hands that the artist's name was forgotten. The leader of the British school was impressed into persuading the Society of Artists, who staged England's leading exhibitions, to break their rule against showing anonymous pictures. This first American work to be shown in Europe caused a sensation. Reynolds considered it "a very wonderful performance," but was worried by the hard, sometimes graceless realism of Copley's technique. Having learned the artist's name, Reynolds wrote him that, since he was "capable of producing such a piece by the mere efforts of your own genius," he would be "one of the first painters of the world" if he secured European instruction before he got into the habit of "working in your little way in Boston." But Copley preferred working in his "little way." He continued his personal experimentation, teaching himself how to compose pictures as complicated and strong as *Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Mifflin* (Figure 11).

Younger men of great promise were marching behind Copley along the same road: Gilbert Stuart, John Trumbull, Ralph Earl, all to be important figures in the next era of American art. When he painted Roger Sherman, a shoemaker turned judge, who helped draft the Declaration of Independence (Figure 12), Earl sought no ideal or elegant image; he exaggerated the statesman's stern, puritan

ungainliness. The hands are studied naïvely from life, with the veins visible; the clumsy torso is revealed in too tight a vest. There is bulk in this part of the picture, but suddenly everything becomes spidery. Although Earl painted the upper half of his sitter as if he were standing slightly above him, he became so fascinated with the deep space under the chair that he seems to have got down on the floor to peer through the long vista. The resulting contrast between mass above and depth below is odd and unnaturalistic, yet, because it was conceived by a powerful artistic mind, it sets the viewer's imagination spinning.

In 1775, the first American painting tradition was brought to an abrupt halt by the outbreak of the Revolution. During long years of social upheaval, there was no business for painters, and, one after another, the leading workmen were forced to seek their livelihood in Europe. The sun of peace, when it rose again, shone on a new nation which called for and fostered a different art.

Had the painters of America's colonial era gone off completely on their own, creating that unique art for which modern chauvinists sometimes clamor, they would not have been more American but less so, for they would have been untrue to their neighbors and themselves. Where their environment reflected transatlantic ideas and institutions, the painters reflected transatlantic sources; where America differed, so did they. In their attitude towards man, indeed, they advanced more rapidly than their sitters towards the equalitarianism that was rising in the new land. From the point of view of technique the artists revealed that mixture of Old World lore (often tenuously understood) with improvisation (often dictated by necessity) which characterized every aspect of American life. At first, all the painters were "primitives," but inevitably tradition and skill accreted. During the 115 years that intervened between *Mrs. Freake and Baby Mary* and the Revolution, painters expressed, accurately and sometimes with beauty, the development of the society which at last stepped upon the world stage as the United States.

ADVICE TO A TRAVELER

Do not start in a hurricane—
But go in a summer morning's calm
To an anchored boat at the water's rim.
Once in the boat, do not think of *where*;
Dangers enough will beset you there.

Mornings of music that shook you awake
To snow, or a tree like a drawn girl,
You must forget. Do not try to slake
Your thirst too early in the still lake;
Or ask: how shall the heart be whole?

At twilight, when the surface mirrors you,
Its color delicate, its view untrue,
Think: will it last as long as rock,
Long after eyes no sighs renew,
Or pass, indifferently, into dark?

Look up or down in the illusive air:
The lake is shallow at your feet, its glass
Cannot harm you now; nevertheless,
In the sky above you, birds draw
Circles of enormous loneliness.

ELEGY FOR MY FATHER

Father, whom I murdered every night but one,
That one, when your death murdered me,
Your body waits within the wasting sod.
Clutching at the straw-face of your God,
Do you remember me, your morbid son,
Curled in a death, all motive unbegun,
Continuum of flesh, who never thought to be
The mourning mirror of your potency?

All you had battled for the nightmare took
Away, as dropping from your eyes, the sea-
Salt tears, with messages that none could read,
Impotent, pellucid, were the final seeds
You sowed. Above you, the white night nurse shook
His head, and moaning on the moods of luck,
We knew the double-dealing enemy:
From pain you suffered, pain had set you free.

Down from the ceiling, father, circles came:
Angels, perhaps, to bear your soul away.
But tasting the persisting salt of pain,
I think my tears created them, though in vain,
Like yours, they fell. All losses link: the same
Creature marred us both to stake his claim.
Shutting my eyelids, barring night and day,
I saw, and see, your body borne away.

Two months dead, I wrestle with your name
Whose separate letters make a paltry sum
That is not you. If still you harbor mine,
Think of the house we had in summertime,
When in the sea-light every early game
Was played with love, and if death's waters came,
You'd rescue me. How I would take you from,
Now, if I could, its whirling vacuum.

VENICE

Its wingéd lion stands up straight to hide
The source of pain: the reign of the unnatural.
One cannot tell how really false the real is.
One cannot tell how real the really false is.
Seen in one light, we apprehend the Beautiful:
The thinnest minarets of lattice lacework
Tangibly recovered from the hardest natural
Elements command our endless homage:
One doorway makes our human lives seem trivial.
In yet another light, a scabrous limb of Venus,
Dangling in rank water, rots to golden bone—
The swank and stink of the imagination
Beautifully gone bad. Its waterways re-weave
The only city that has seen itself
Reflected in the mirror of its very eye,
Made-up, each century, in vain for views
No one can now remember. How the painters lie,
Taken altogether, in their fabrication!
Even the Adriatic, static in its green,
Evokes no known sea. From the campanile,
One sees, face down, a short, ceramic fish
Glittering its red-tiled scales below.
Exquisite emphases and subtle losses
Make up its tide. For power, four bronze horses,
Brought from Byzantium, outpace the sun.
Dwindling to our shadows in outside salons
Where orchestras of afternoon rehearse our evening,
We sound the very history of fear we felt
Through all the shorter histories of fear we feel.
Is it true, we think, our sorry otherness
Is to fall in love with beasts whose beauty ruins us?
Those beasts are everywhere, though Venice says
Lions to be golden must be painted gold.

THE HERMIT

Always there is someone who has turned away
From the important mornings and the evening's eye,
Who sits on the top of a tall stairway
Somewhere in the country, or at the edge of slums,
And lives there quietly, day after day,
And does not turn his head to look our way.

What made him leave our ashes and our love?
Did the open sky above the city tempt
His mortal senses to the green, unkempt
Free countryside? And now to disappoint him
The leaves are shy, and the birds
Go about their nests and songs.

Loving the mountains, hating the shore,
Wherever he is, he is not far
From whatever it is that brought him there.
Left in a circle of deserted air,
He draws the edges round him like a tent to hide
The wanderer, traveling inside.

His eyes are wild, his island is insane,
We say, and envy secretly his deeper calm.
He calls it home. Perhaps inverted pride,
Pursued in childhood, was his suicide;
Or maybe once, walking in a crowd,
He shuddered at the passion at his side.

Dressed for a battle that has taken place,
Or will never happen, he masks his face
Against the hostile, preferring the alone.
Tuning his armor to the distant guns,
He writes, in a circle, on his shield,
O miseries and appetites of the world.

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WINTER'S END

Once in a wood at winter's end,
The withered sun, becoming young,
Turned the white silence into sound:
Bird after bird rose up in song.
The skeletons of snow-blocked trees
Linked thinning shadows here and there,
And those made mummy by the freeze
Spangled their mirrors on cold air.
Whether they moved—perhaps they spun,
Caught in a new but known delight—
Was hard to tell, since shade and sun
Mingled to hear the birds recite.
No body of this sound I saw,
So glassed and shining was the world
That swung on a sun-and-ice seesaw
And fought to have its leaves unfurled.
Hanging its harvest in between
Two worlds, one lost, one yet to come,
The wood's remoteness, like a drum,
Beat the oncoming season in.
Then every snow bird on white wings
Became its tropic counterpart,
And, in a renaissance of rings,
I saw the heart of summer start.

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E. B. White

THE SECOND TREE FROM THE CORNER

"Ever have any bizarre thoughts?" asked the doctor.

Mr. Trexler failed to catch the word. "What kind?" he said.

"Bizarre," repeated the doctor, his voice steady. He watched his patient for any slight change of expression, any wince. It seemed to Trexler that the doctor was not only watching him closely but was creeping slowly toward him, like a lizard toward a bug. Trexler shoved his chair back an inch and gathered himself for a reply. He was about to say "Yes" when he realized that if he said yes the next question would be unanswerable. Bizarre thoughts, bizarre thoughts? Ever had any bizarre thoughts? What kind of thoughts *except* bizarre had he had since the age of two?

Trexler felt the time passing, the necessity for an answer. These psychiatrists were busy men, overloaded, not to be kept waiting. The next patient was probably already perched out there in the waiting room, lonely, worried, shifting around on the sofa, his mind stuffed with bizarre thoughts and amorphous fears. Poor bastard, thought Trexler. Out there all alone in that misshapen antechamber, staring at the filing cabinet and wondering whether to tell the doctor about that day on the Madison Avenue bus.

Let's see, bizarre thoughts. Trexler dodged back along the dreadful

corridor of the years to see what he could find. He felt the doctor's eyes upon him and knew that time was running out. Don't be so conscientious, he said to himself. If a bizarre thought is indicated here, just reach into the bag and pick anything at all. A man as well supplied with bizarre thoughts as you are should have no difficulty producing one for the record. Trexler darted into the bag, hung for a moment before one of his thoughts, as a hummingbird pauses in the delphinium. No, he said, not that one. He darted to another (the one about the rhesus monkey), paused, considered. No, he said, not that.

Trexler knew he must hurry. He had already used up pretty nearly four seconds since the question had been put. But it was an impossible situation—just one more lousy, impossible situation such as he was always getting himself into. When, he asked himself, are you going to quit maneuvering yourself into a pocket? He made one more effort. This time he stopped at the asylum, only the bars were of lucite—fluted, retractable. Not here, he said. Not this one.

He looked straight at the doctor. "No," he said quietly. "I never have any bizarre thoughts."

The doctor sucked in on his pipe, blew a plume of smoke toward the rows of medical books. Trexler's gaze followed the smoke. He managed to make out one of the titles, "The Genito-Urinary System." A bright wave of fear swept cleanly over him, and he winced under the first pain of kidney stones. He remembered when he was a child, the first time he ever entered a doctor's office, sneaking a look at the titles of the books—and the flush of fear, the shirt wet under the arms, the book on t.b., the sudden knowledge that he was in the advanced stages of consumption, the quick vision of the hemorrhage. Trexler sighed wearily. Forty years, he thought, and I still get thrown by the title of a medical book. Forty years and I still can't stay on life's little bucky horse. No wonder I'm sitting here in this dreary joint at the end of this woebegone afternoon, lying about my bizarre thoughts to a doctor who looks, come to think of it, rather tired.

The session dragged on. After about twenty minutes, the doctor rose and knocked his pipe out. Trexler got up, knocked the ashes out

of his brain, and walked. The doctor smiled warmly and stuck out his hand. "There's nothing the matter with you—you're just scared. Want to know how I know you're scared?"

"How?" asked Trexler.

"Look at the chair you've been sitting in! See how it has moved back away from my desk? You kept inching away from me while I asked you questions. That means you're scared."

"Does it?" said Trexler, faking a grin. "Yeah, I suppose it does."

They finished shaking hands. Trexler turned and walked out uncertainly along the passage, then into the waiting room and out past the next patient, a ruddy pin-striped man who was seated on the sofa twirling his hat nervously and staring straight ahead at the files. Poor, frightened guy, thought Trexler, he's probably read in the *Times* that one American male out of every two is going to die of heart disease by twelve o'clock next Thursday. It says that in the paper almost every morning. And he's also probably thinking about that day on the Madison Avenue bus.

A week later, Trexler was back in the patient's chair. And for several weeks thereafter he continued to visit the doctor, always toward the end of the afternoon, when the vapors hung thick above the pool of the mind and darkened the whole region of the East Seventies. He felt no better as time went on, and he found it impossible to work. He discovered that the visits were becoming routine and that although the routine was one to which he certainly did not look forward, at least he could accept it with cool resignation, as once, years ago, he had accepted a long spell with a dentist who had settled down to a steady fooling with a couple of dead teeth. The visits, moreover, were now assuming a pattern recognizable to the patient.

Each session would begin with a résumé of symptoms—the dizziness in the streets, the constricting pain in the back of the neck, the apprehensions, the tightness of the scalp, the inability to concentrate, the despondency and the melancholy times, the feeling of pressure and tension, the anger at not being able to work, the anxiety over work not done, the gas on the stomach. Dullest set of neurotic symptoms in the world, Trexler would think, as he obediently

trudged back over them for the doctor's benefit. And then, having listened attentively to the recital, the doctor would spring his question: "Have you found anything that gives you relief?" And Trexler would answer, "Yes. A drink." And the doctor would nod his head knowingly.

As he became familiar with the pattern Trexler found that he increasingly tended to identify himself with the doctor, transferring himself into the doctor's seat—probably (he thought) some rather slick form of escapism. At any rate, it was nothing new for Trexler to identify himself with other people. Whenever he got into a cab, he instantly became the driver, saw everything from the hackman's angle (and the reaching over with the right hand, the nudging of the flag, the pushing it down, all the way down along the side of the meter), saw everything—traffic, fare, everything—through the eyes of Anthony Rocco, or Isidore Freedman, or Matthew Scott. In a barbershop, Trexler was the barber, his fingers curled around the comb, his hand on the tonic. Perfectly natural, then, that Trexler should soon be occupying the doctor's chair, asking the questions, waiting for the answers. He got quite interested in the doctor, in this way. He liked him, and he found him a not too difficult patient.

It was on the fifth visit, about halfway through, that the doctor turned to Trexler and said, suddenly, "What do you want?" He gave the word "want" special emphasis.

"I d'know," replied Trexler uneasily. "I guess nobody knows the answer to that one."

"Sure they do," replied the doctor.

"Do you know what you want?" asked Trexler narrowly.

"Certainly," said the doctor. Trexler noticed that at this point the doctor's chair slid slightly backward, away from him. Trexler stifled a small, internal smile. Scared as a rabbit, he said to himself. Look at him scoot!

"What *do* you want?" continued Trexler, pressing his advantage, pressing it hard.

The doctor glided back another inch away from his inquisitor. "I want a wing on the small house I own in Westport. I want more money, and more leisure to do the things I want to do."

Trexler was just about to say, "And what are those things you want to do, Doctor?" when he caught himself. Better not go too far, he mused. Better not lose possession of the ball. And besides, he thought, what the hell goes on here, anyway—me paying fifteen bucks a throw for these séances and then doing the work myself, asking the questions, weighing the answers. So he wants a new wing! There's a fine piece of theatrical gauze for you! A new wing.

Trexler settled down again and resumed the role of patient for the rest of the visit. It ended on a kindly, friendly note. The doctor reassured him that his fears were the cause of his sickness, and that his fears were unsubstantial. They shook hands, smiling.

Trexler walked dizzily through the empty waiting room and the doctor followed along to let him out. It was late; the secretary had shut up shop and gone home. Another day over the dam. "Good-bye," said Trexler. He stepped into the street, turned west toward Madison, and thought of the doctor all alone there, after hours, in that desolate hole—a man who worked longer hours than his secretary. Poor, scared, overworked bastard, thought Trexler. And that new wing!

It was an evening of clearing weather, the Park showing green and desirable in the distance, the last daylight applying a high lacquer to the brick and brownstone walls and giving the street scene a luminous and intoxicating splendor. Trexler meditated, as he walked, on what he wanted. "What do you want?" he heard again. Trexler knew what he wanted, and what, in general all men wanted; and he was glad, in a way, that it was both inexpressible and unattainable, and that it wasn't a wing. He was satisfied to remember that it was deep, formless, enduring, and impossible of fulfillment, and that it made men sick, and that when you sauntered along Third Avenue and looked through the doorways into the dim saloons, you could sometimes pick out from the unregenerate ranks the ones who had not forgotten, gazing steadily into the bottoms of the glasses on the long chance that they could get another little peek at it. Trexler found himself renewed by the remembrance that what he wanted was at once great and microscopic, and that although it borrowed from the nature of large deeds and of youthful love and of old songs and early intimations, it was not any one of these things, and that it

had not been isolated or pinned down, and that a man who attempted to define it in the privacy of a doctor's office would fall flat on his face.

Trexler felt invigorated. Suddenly his sickness seemed health, his dizziness stability. A small tree, rising between him and the light, stood there saturated with the evening, each gilt-edged leaf perfectly drunk with excellence and delicacy. Trexler's spine registered an ever so slight tremor as it picked up this natural disturbance in the lovely scene. "I want the second tree from the corner, just as it stands," he said, answering an imaginary question from an imaginary physician. And he felt a slow pride in realizing that what he wanted none could bestow, and that what he had none could take away. He felt content to be sick, unembarrassed at being afraid; and in the jungle of his fear he glimpsed (as he had so often glimpsed them before) the flashy tail feathers of the bird courage.

Then he thought once again of the doctor, and of his being left there all alone, tired, frightened. (The poor, scared guy, thought Trexler.) Trexler began humming "Moonshine Lullaby," his spirit reacting instantly to the hypodermic of Merman's healthy voice. He crossed Madison, boarded a downtown bus, and rode all the way to Fifty-second Street before he had a thought that could rightly have been called bizarre.

Francis Steegmuller

A MISSIONARY OF OLD PICTURES

The Jarves Collection at Yale University

In the art gallery of Yale University there hangs a collection of 119 old Italian paintings, chiefly of the early schools. A chance visitor does not immediately perceive it to be anything startling: one has come to expect to find a group of respectable old pictures in the museum of an Ivy League university. But on second glance the informed visitor is shocked into attention: who could *expect* to find, in a small gallery anywhere outside Tuscany and Umbria, some of these rarities—the two Sassettas, for example, the signed Gentile da Fabriano, and the *Rape of Deianira* that is one of the few known pictures by Antonio Pollaiuolo? And when one learns that these pictures—whose quality and interest gradually reveal themselves as more and more extraordinary—have been in America since before the Civil War and at Yale since 1868, then one begins indeed to marvel at them as at a phenomenon and to wonder about their history and about their collector.

For, although pre-Civil War America had many admirable preoccupations, Italian medieval and early Renaissance painting were distinctly not among them. Nor were these schools generally esteemed or well known elsewhere. In England a certain number of eighteenth

and early nineteenth-century milords had brought back with them from their grand tours occasional so-called "primitive" Italian paintings along with their more fashionable, late Renaissance purchases; in the Louvre a group of such pictures, gathered by Napoleon's art-impresario, Baron Vivan-Denon, from Italian convents and monasteries, to illustrate the early development of Italian art, had been allowed to remain after Waterloo because it was considered insufficiently important to be returned to Italy; in Italy itself, early, gold-background pictures were quite frequently burned to obtain the value of the gold which remained in the ashes, and John Ruskin, when he began in Florence to study this art, found himself alone and undisturbed in front of unappreciated frescoes.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the persuasive voice of Ruskin, propagandist for medieval art, was increasingly influential among those who read English. It was doubtless in Boston, most cultivated of American cities, that Ruskin had his greatest number of transatlantic readers. It will therefore seem logical that it was indeed precisely a Bostonian student of Ruskin who collected the early Italian paintings now at Yale—the first such collection to come to America. The only gaps in the logic are that although he lived in Boston off and on for the first thirty-three years of his life, this Bostonian had little schooling and had apparently never heard of Ruskin until he expatriated himself and settled in Florence; and that when he had got his collection together and brought it across the Atlantic Boston would not look at it. Its riches were first displayed to Americans in New York, a city regarded by Boston as an encampment of barbarians; and ten years later its madonnas, angels, and saints were acquired by a Connecticut college most of whose trustees were at that time pious Congregationalist clergymen supposedly immune to the blandishments of papist imagery. Unlike many nineteenth-century stories about the arts in the United States, this one is not exclusively Bostonian but rather more broadly American.

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The 119 Italian pictures at Yale are known as "The Jarves Collection," and their collector, James Jackson Jarves, was born in Boston

in 1818. He was the grandson of an eighteenth-century English cabinetmaker naturalized American, and the son of a skilled technician in the art of glassmaking—Deming Jarves, the inventor of that Yankee product known as Sandwich Glass, a mechanically pressed ware sold at low prices for household use. His successful mechanization of what had hitherto been a hand industry made Deming Jarves wealthy, and it would be easy to diagnose the connoisseurship of his son as a kind of third-generation attenuation in a family of craftsmen: from honest modern furniture shop to prosperous modern glassworks to the parasitic buying of old works of art. Similarly, it would be easy to see in Jarves' expatriation and preoccupation with European culture a kind of third-generation full circle: Old World craftsman grandfather, New World manufacturing son, Old World aesthete grandson. But either diagnosis would be perilously oversimple. Jarves did not collect for mere pride of possession or for the adornment of his house; and his expatriation in Italy was to bring about in some ways a richer association with his native land.

After a boyhood spent in Boston and near his father's glassworks at Sandwich on Cape Cod, Jarves set out at eighteen for a place that was in many ways far more raw than New England itself. This was Honolulu, in those days five months distant from Boston by sailing ship around Cape Horn or slightly nearer if the journey were broken by an overland trek across Central America. The reason for this mid-Pacific exile was an unexplained fragility of health which the adolescent had developed—he was an attractive, high-strung youth—and which had prevented him from pursuing his studies and entering Harvard like other young Bostonians of well-to-do family. The doctors prescribed a mild climate, and the Jarves family had connections among the Protestant missionaries who were at that time busily converting the once-happy Polynesians. In this island society, composed of the assorted crudities of missions, aborigines in transition, visiting traders, whalers, and beachcombers, Jarves spent, off and on, about eight unprosperous and unsettled years. He disillusioned his ambitious young New England bride by losing money not only as a silk raiser and storekeeper, but even as a salaried civil servant; he edited one of the first Hawaiian newspapers, and he wrote the first

history of the islands. After leaving Hawaii as an unlikely place of fortune he lost considerably more money in California, where everyone else was growing rich in the gold rush of 1849.

In 1851, at the age of thirty-three, no richer than when he had first left home at eighteen, still dependent on his father's bounty, he set out from Boston again, with his wife and two children—this time for Europe. He was still in search of a mild climate, and despite his unrelieved commercial failures he—or his father—had somehow persuaded a Boston business house to hire him as "purchasing agent" abroad. Jarves was never to be any good at making money, but very soon now he was to begin quite a career as "purchasing agent." Not for the Boston business house—nothing more is heard of that probably unfortunate concern once Jarves arrives in Europe—but for posterity.

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It was in the Louvre, in the winter of 1851–52, that Jarves saw the light which transformed his daily life from a haphazard, commercial-editorial groping and fumbling to a glowing artistic mission.

> I ask every cultivated American (he later wrote) what are his sensations as those treasures of Art, in which Europe abounds, for the first time open upon his intellectual vision? Does he not feel the same sense of expansive joy—a new truth springing up within him, something which exalts him inwardly and perfects his humanity by gratifying innate but heretofore inexpressible longings—which the dweller amid crowded streets feels, when he also for the first time rambles forth into the country, breathes the fresh air, and gazes upon the wondrous variety of nature?
> Our first great experience was the Louvre gallery. Wandering through its interminable ranges of pictures, or lost in its vast halls of statuary, we became oppressed, confused, uncertain, and feverish.

But just as a desert cannot burst into bloom unless there have been seeds in its sand, conversions and illuminations usually happen to people who have been in some way prepared for them. "My prior experiences," Jarves later wrote, "were derived solely from years of travel in virgin-soils, where Art was either as unknown as the mountains of the moon, or but a feeble exotic." That statement is fairly accurate—there was certainly little art to be seen in Boston, and

Jarves was not thinking of feather capes, fetishes, and other Polynesian artifacts. But inevitably the family cabinetmaking and glass-pressing had counted for something: although Deming Jarves was primarily a Yankee inventor and businessman, his son had also seen him engrossed in the shapes and colors of his Sandwich glass. And if one searches in the columns of the Hawaiian newspaper which the young Jarves edited, one can find articles by him in which he casually praises certain art forms which were then all but unknown: the architecture and hieroglyphics of the Mayans, which he had seen in the jungles of Yucatan. It was remarkable, at the time, that he should independently admire them—Mayan art has had to await nearly our own day for general appreciation; clearly, Jarves was generally susceptible; but given the time and the circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that it took the Louvre to administer the real *coup de foudre*.

At the end of 1852 the undereducated but aroused Jarves moved to Florence, which was to be his home for the rest of his days. For the first time he found himself moving in a society that was highly cultivated and artistically minded, and this, coming so soon after the revelation of his own artistic sensibility in the Louvre, was to him a mighty stimulation, almost a kind of intoxication. It plunged him into a heady course of self-education. He read the art writings of Alexis Rio, Lord Lindsay, Ruskin, Anna Jameson, and others. He met most of those people personally. He saw thousands of pictures. And he conceived a grand purpose:

It has long been a pet scheme of mine (he later wrote) to initiate in Boston a permanent Gallery of paintings, with particular reference to the chronology, motives & technical progress of Art, from the earliest development in Italy of the Christian idea, until its climax in the matured genius of its several illustrious schools. Masterpieces it was hopeless to expect to secure. Researches, however, made for my private studies, showed me that it was possible for me on the spot to get together a valuable collection of pictures covering the ground from the Xth to the XVIth century, characteristic of the great masters and their schools, provided it was gone about promptly, quietly and diligently. Unwilling to lose the opportunity, I decided upon taking the responsibility upon myself of making such a collection and of its subsequent adoption by my townsmen. My own

means being inadequate, I borrowed a sufficient sum to warrant the undertaking . . . I lost no time in going systematically to work to secure genuine specimens of Byzantine and Graeco-Italian paintings and so on chiefly following the current of the Florentine, Sienese and Umbrian schools to the time of Raffael.
My adventures in this pursuit were often curious and instructive . . . They involved an inquisition into the intricacies of numberless villas, palaces, convents, churches and household dens all over this portion of Italy, the employment of many agents to scout out my prey; many fatiguing journeyings, miles upon miles of wearisome staircases, dusty explorations of dark retreats, dirt, disappointment, fraud, lies and monies often fruitlessly spent; all compensated however by the gradual accumulation of a valuable gallery.

Jarves spent the first seven years of his new life in Florence accumulating the "valuable gallery." He bought pictures of all periods, but especially those by earlier, older masters—"primitives." These were cheaper, for one thing; they were historically interesting; and furthermore they touched him:

A distinguished poet beautifully illustrated to me, one day (he later wrote), the tenderness of kindred Art. He had collected many specimens of the works of the early religious painters of Italy, quaint and dry in execution, but, injured and time-worn as they were, full of deep meaning. Upon my inquiring why his taste led him to purchase pictures which the present age, in the pride of its science, despised, he replied that . . . respect for the minds that produced them prompted him to take them to his own home, as an asylum from modern ignorance and scepticism.

Everything else was sacrificed to the collection. Jarves' wife became shrill and bitter, conceiving a violent hatred of the pictures, on which she accused him of frittering away his money—and he did indeed spend so much on pictures that she and the children went without things they should have had. His brothers and sisters in Massachusetts protested that the money he spent was not his to spend: they had seen most of it wheedled for him from his father by his doting mother, as a loan against his eventual inheritance—but in America, already a land of rapid change, who could know how large or how small a future inheritance might be, or whether there would be an inheritance at all? None of this interrupted Jarves in his collecting. Nothing counted except the buying of pictures for Boston, so that

other Americans might be converted as he had been. Just as the family crafts had left their mark on him, so also, apparently, had the Hawaiian missions to the heathen!

By 1859 Jarves owned 130 paintings, which he valued at $60,000. The financial situation in which he now found himself made it impossible for him to present them outright to Boston, as he unquestionably would have liked to do, and he therefore wrote to Charles Eliot Norton, a trustee of the Boston Athenaeum, offering to be at least a *partial* Augustus: "I propose for $20,000 to deliver the collection . . . to any Association or individuals pledged to make it finally the nucleus of a permanent gallery for Boston." Norton and some of his friends recognized the generosity of the offer and at once set about trying to raise the $20,000 by subscription. But Bostonians, unless they had traveled abroad, had never seen old Italian pictures in their lives, and buying a pig in a poke is not exactly a New England custom. Then it became known that several prominent Bostonians who *had* traveled abroad had seen the pictures in Florence and had heard rumors that all of them might not have been painted by the people Jarves claimed as their artists. Bostonians were unversed in the subtleties of attribution: the word "charlatan" began to circulate. When Jarves arrived in America with his pictures in July, 1860, he found that Boston not only would not buy them, but would not even provide exhibition space.

New York offered at least that, and at the Institute of Fine Arts, a private art gallery at 625 Broadway, the first American exhibition of Jarves' Italian pictures opened in November, 1860.

The opening of this exhibition opened also a new phase in the status of the pictures: since his own city had rejected them, the disappointed and financially crippled Jarves was eager to dispose of them elsewhere at a fair price, and the hunt for a buyer began. In New York the collection attracted a certain degree of attention from the critics and the public—there was, of course, derision as well as praise—but despite several nibbles no individual or institution made a firm offer to purchase, even when Jarves declared himself willing to accept a down payment of only $10,000. The exhibition closed in April, 1861, with the onset of the Civil War. Reluctantly, because

of his need for money, Jarves did what he had particularly hoped to avoid doing: he detracted from the "historical" aspect of the collection by selling a few pictures singly. During the war many of the others were stored away.

Then, in 1868, Yale College, which possessed the oldest college art gallery in America (founded in 1832), and which in 1864 had opened the first American college art school, offered to lend Jarves $20,000 for three years at six per cent interest and to hang 119 of the pictures as security. Jarves accepted, and signed an agreement giving Yale the right to buy the pictures outright, during the three-year period, for $50,000. But Yale did not buy, and at the end of three years Jarves could not pay back what he had borrowed. Nor could he find any other purchaser—even though art museums were at this time being founded or planned up and down the Atlantic coast—in Boston, New York, Baltimore, and Washington. The paintings were therefore sold at auction in New Haven; and under circumstances that have never been satisfactorily explained—at the last moment the college treasurer announced that the pictures would be sold not singly but en bloc, and in any case there was a strange, seemingly preconcerted absence of bidders—Yale College secured the entire collection not for the $50,000 it had agreed to pay in case of normal purchase, but for its solitary bid of $22,000, the amount of Jarves' loan plus unpaid interest. Jarves screamed his dismay in the newspapers; Yale offered him a year's grace to redeem the pictures (there were antiart factions in the faculty bitterly reproachful of the treasurer for squandering $22,000 of the university's funds on daubs); but Jarves remained without funds, and in 1872 the collection passed irrevocably from his hands.

Yale has never concealed its satisfaction in thus acquiring, for little money, one of the finest and most pioneering collections of early Italian pictures outside Italy and the only one then in America. "The college got the collection for much less than its real intrinsic value," the director of the art school wrote shortly after the auction; and more recently another professor has called the transaction "one of the most irregular pieces of University finance on record and certainly one of the most brilliant." It is undeniable, as Yale has always

stoutly maintained, that Jarves had found no buyer willing to offer more; and at Yale the collection found the kind of home that Jarves wanted for it; and yet in this piece of "University finance" one's sympathy goes to Jarves, who shortly after the auction, in Florence with his second wife, passed through an acute financial and psychological crisis and had to sell his furniture and other effects to keep alive. He survived, however, and subsequently sold a second group of pictures to a Cleveland millionaire in return for mining stocks that proved to be worthless. He wrote five books on art history and aesthetics, which are among the earliest American writings on those subjects and include the first Western book on Japanese art; for a time he was American vice-consul in Florence; in his later years he advised Cornelius Vanderbilt and other donors to the Metropolitan Museum in New York; and he presented to that musuem a collection of Venetian glass in memory of his father. Jarves died in Switzerland in 1888 and is buried in the English cemetery at Rome.

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His great monument is the collection at New Haven, and it is there, in the Yale art gallery, that one lingers to savor the pictures and some of the considerations they bring to mind.

For one thing, this early American collection is a lesson in the supremacy of connoisseurship. Its *raisons d'être*, as stated by Jarves, read somewhat quaintly today: Americans no longer need to be shown by him the existence of early Italian painting and converted to a love of it; and his guiding concept in forming the collection—to illustrate the "progress" of Art, "from the earliest development . . . until its climax"—seems naïve to the present generation, which far from recognizing such "progress" recognizes a drawing on the wall of a prehistoric cave as the aesthetic peer of a more "sophisticated" or "classic" production. Also, unequipped with modern scientific apparatus or even with formal scholarship, Jarves did—as the gentlemen in Boston whispered so damningly—make many mistakes in attribution. (It should be said, however, that modern experts have made revisions "upward" as well as "downward" in reattributing

some of Jarves' pictures to greater or lesser artists.) But the validity or nonvalidity of the missionary aims behind a collection is beside the point; and, in the last analysis, names do not count: Jarves' great accomplishment was to choose unerringly pictures that have, so to speak, lives of their own which they lead, serenely or pulsatingly as the case may be, on the walls of their gallery, oblivious of manifestoes and *expertises*. Another great American connoisseur, Bernard Berenson, has always paid tribute to Jarves' "eye":

> I have had a cult of him, as the first American who wrote discriminatingly about Italian painting of the early Renaissance, indeed as well as any European, British or Continental. Then there is his collection, which again does him great honor. Few Europeans in his day would have done better.

Despite his activities, Jarves has always remained remarkably obscure. One might glibly attribute this to his being an American art lover in an environment hostile to art, an aesthete lost among the blast furnaces. But even during Jarves' lifetime, the interest of Americans in art was gathering great momentum, and after his death his ideal, the kind of art collection he had wished to found for Boston, was realized in city after city. And yet in this realization Jarves' memory played no part. His art writings were not reprinted, and went unmentioned in bibliographies. The beauty of the Sienese school, which he was one of the first to proclaim and illustrate, had to be independently "discovered" in 1903 by R. Langton Douglas. Bernard Berenson himself knew nothing of Jarves until 1904—after he had formed the Gardner collection of Italian art in Boston. And even today, outside New Haven and outside a belated but grateful mention, in the handbook of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, of his frustrated attempt to secure the foundation of that city's first collection of paintings, Jarves' name is seldom heard in America. The pictures themselves, although internationally admired by connoisseurs, are comparatively little visited. There are many Americans, living not far from New Haven and eager to thrill to pictures in European art galleries, to whom the Jarves pictures are unknown.

This is perhaps because, as one appreciative critic has put it: "The collection contains no world masterpieces, nor again any blatant curiosity to attract the profane or restless interest." Similarly although

in aspects of his private life and in the obsession of his collecting there was something close to demonic about Jarves, his public voice was not a loud one. He could collect, but he could not impose. He had no compelling authority. He had not even a university degree, let alone an academic position. He never sought membership in even a coterie. He was without large fortune. He was a charming writer, but not a shrill or sonorous publicist. In no large and dynamic society is such a combination of characteristics apt to lead to celebrity. Amid the rumble the softer voice goes unheard except by those few who are attuned. But just as the Jarves paintings at Yale gradually reveal, to the qualified spectator, their true character as deep and beautiful sources of life enrichment, so to the investigator their collector gradually reveals himself to be, in attractive living form, what Henry James, in his novels, so often attractively invented: the subtle, susceptible nineteenth-century American with a poignant sense of the past and a long view of the future.

John Hall Wheelock | **FOUR POEMS**

ELEGY

Nec mea qui digitis lumina condat erit

The gnu up at the Zoo
Has closed his eyes in death,
He was a very patient gnu
Who never made too much to-do
Until he was out of breath.
Few there were understood him,
Very few understood him—
Now he is gone
I mourn alone
That most untimely death.

The ape who had no shape
Went over the hill today,
He always wanted to escape
Until he discovered a way—
And he closed his eyes
In sheer surprise
When he found he was dead, they say.
Many there are will mourn him,
Many who once did scorn him,
And some there are will pray.

I pray every day
For all things that draw breath—
For the ape and the gnu
Up at the Zoo,
For the turtle-dove and the tiger too,
I pray with every breath.
But chiefly for myself I pray,
And for the staring fish that may
Not close their eyes by night or day—
No, not even in death.

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THE CRUEL SONG

Move with a dancing step to a sad music

In agonizing dance,
With fierce reluctant love,
To the measure of that song
In which they live and move,
In iron governance
All things are whirled along.
All things that live and are,
Breathless or drawing breath,
Atom and man and star,
Time's cycle and renewal,
Rhythms of birth and death,
Are dancing to that song,
Inflexible and cruel,
By the one music bound
Whose counterpoint is pain.
As the great song turns round
They turn, retreat, advance,
Follow the pattern through,
Retreat, advance again,
Longingly, loathingly,
As the music bids them do—

And all dance, dance,
In that great agony.

All living things, all flesh,
Earth's violent wills at war,
Striving with one another,
Dying, each of the other,
In the bloody web of things
Tangled, the carnal mesh,
In toils of the struggle bound
That each was fashioned for,
In lust and agony
Woven of one another
In the brute clash of things—
As the great song wheels round,
(The primal dissonance),
They tread the harsh measure through,
Do as they have to do;
And all dance, dance,
In that great agony.

The atom, a whirling storm,
Hushed fury of force
Locked on itself, the swarm
Of the stars in heaven too,
Locked each in its course,
Straining against the tether,
By the one music bound,
To the one truth held true
That holds all things together
In iron bondage held
As the great song comes round;
In agony compelled,
Out of that agony
"God! God!" they cry,
"Joy! Joy!" they cry—

O the joy is agony,
That agony is joy—
"Dance, dance," they cry,
"Dance, dance for joy,
In the great agony!"

BONAC

Du bist Orplid, mein Land, das ferne leuchtet—Mörike

I

This is enchanted country, lies under a spell,
Bird-haunted, ocean-haunted—land of youth,
Land of first love, land of death also, perhaps,
And desired return. Sea-tang and honeysuckle
Perfume the air, where the old house looks out
Across mild lowlands, meadows of scrub and pine,
A shell echoing the sea's monotone
That haunts these shores. And here, all summer through,
From dawn to dusk, there will be other music
Threading the sea's music: at rise of sun,
With jubilation half-awakened birds
Salute his coming again, the lord of life,
His ambulatory footstep over the earth,
Who draws after him all that tide of song—
Salute the oncoming day, while from the edges
Of darkness, westward, fading voices call,
Night's superseded voices, the whip-poor-will's
Lamentation and farewell. Morning and noon
And afternoon and evening, the singing of birds
Lies on this country like a benediction:
Robin and wren, catbird, phoebe and chat,
Song-sparrow's music-box tune, and from the slender
Arches of inmost shade, the woodland's roof,
Where few winds come, flutelike adagio or
Wild syrinx-cry and high raving of the thrush,

Their clang and piercing pierce the spirit through—
Look off into blue heaven, you shall witness
Angelic motions, the volt and sidewise shift
Of the swallow in mid-air. Enchanted land,
Where time has died; old ocean-haunted land;
Land of first love, where grape and honeysuckle
Tangle their vines, where the beach-plum in spring
Snows all the inland dunes; bird-haunted land,
Where youth still dwells forever, your long day
Draws to its close, bringing for evening-star
Venus, a bud of fire in the pale west,
Bringing dusk and the whip-poor-will again,
And the owl's tremolo and the firefly,
And gradual darkness. Silently the bat,
Over still lawns that listen to the sea,
Weaves the preoccupation of his flight.
The arch of heaven soars upward with all its stars . . .

II

Summer fades soon here, autumn in this country
Comes early and exalted. Where the wild land,
With its sparse bayberry and huckleberry,
Slopes seaward; where the seaward dunes go down,
Echoing, to the sea; over the beaches,
Over the shore-line stretching east and west,
The ineffable slant light of autumn lingers.
The roof of heaven is higher now, the clouds
That drag, trailing, along the enormous vault,
Hang higher, the wide ways are wider now.
Sea-hawks wander the ocean solitudes,
Sea-winds walk there, the waters grow turbulent,
And inland also a new restlessness
Walks the world, remembering something lost,
Seeking something remembered: wheeling wings
And songless woods herald the great departure,
Cattle stray, swallows gather in flocks,

The cloud-travelling moon through gusty cloud
Looks down on the first pilgrims going over,
And hungers in the blood are whispering, "Flee!
Seek otherwhere, here is no lasting home."
Now bird-song fails us, now an older music
Is vibrant in the land—the drowsy cry
Of grasshopper and cricket, earth's low cry
Of sleepy love, her inarticulate cry,
Calling life downward, promising release
From these vague longings, these immortal torments.
The drowsy voice drones on—oh, siren voice:
Aeons of night, milleniums of repose,
Soundless oblivion, divine surcease,
Dark intermingling with the primal darkness,
Oh, not to be, to slough this separate being,
Flow home at last! The alert spirit listens,
Hearing, meanwhile, far-off, along the coast,
Rumors of the rhythm of some wakeful thing,
Reverberations, oceanic tremors,
The multitudinous motions of the sea,
With all its waters, all its warring waves.

CORPUS EST DE DEO

Lo, say the wise, say the very wise—
"Only the soul is of God," say they,
"She shall not perish or pass away,
But the flesh dies, but the fair flesh dies."
Corpus est de Deo.

This is the time, this is the brave time,
How that Lord Christ was risen from death,
All we shall sing, all we that have breath,
In a glad rhyme, in a joyous rhyme.
Corpus est de Deo.

One Joseph said, and good Joseph said,
"That I might bear the body away
And the white body in sepulchre lay,
And the heavy head, the heavy head!"
Corpus est de Deo.

With myrrh and spice, with fresh myrrh and spice
And linen white, the white body they bound—
This saw, from a more removèd ground,
Mary's eyes and the Magdalen's eyes.
Corpus est de Deo.

With spices sweet, with fresh spices sweet,
In tomb they laid the body away;
"Oh, piteous Lord, Master," cried they—
And, "The wounded feet, oh, the wounded feet!"
Corpus est de Deo.

With their own hands, with their own sad hands,
They closed the door with a massy stone,
There none remained but the watch alone—
On His wrists, bands; on His feet, grave-bands.
Corpus est de Deo.

Silence around, deep silence around:
There was none wept with a covered face,
There was none mourning about the place,
With a low sound, with a sad, low sound.
Corpus est de Deo.

Master, arise! Good Master, arise!
Nay, for a little a sleep is sweet—
Desire there was not in His feet,
And in His eyes no light for His eyes.
Corpus est de Deo.

With sound of might, with sound of great might,
The white grave-cloths were rent in sunder,
With a terribleness and wonder,
And a great light and fire of light.
Corpus est de Deo.

Be very glad, be exceeding glad—
Exult, cry out, for your great gladness!
His spirit sprang from the night and sadness,
And was not sad—no, and was not sad.
Corpus est de Deo.

Put by your shame, put by your vain shame,
Loose your lips and your heart in song!
Out of the darkness that is most strong
His body came, His fair body came.
Corpus est de Deo.

Lo, say the wise, say the very wise,
"Soul is of God, the body a vain thing."
Dance with your feet, let your mouth sing!
Lift up your eyes, lift up your sad eyes!
Corpus est de Deo.

In every place say they, in each place,
"Soul is of God; the body of shame."
Out of the dust His sweet body came,
And blood to His face, to His sweet face.
Corpus est de Deo.

Oh, wondrous thing—oh, most blessèd thing:
Body and soul of one great birth!
All ye that are of dust and earth,
Lift up and sing, lift ye up and sing,
"*Corpus est de Deo.*"

F. W. Dupee | **LETTER FROM NEW YORK**

The Frank Lloyd Wright show, "Sixty Years of Living Architecture," was probably the chief event of the autumn season here. Except for a two-bedroom house, complete even to the toys in the nursery, this assemblage of plans, models, and photos was the same which had been seen earlier in several European cities. Here was Wright's lifework, solid, original, imaginative, voluminous, often reaching heights of invention, now and then falling off into banal extravagances. Here, too, as in all Wright's enterprises, was a great deal of the man himself, his heroic commonplaces, his rather nagging wisdom. The catalogue was full of this familiar idiom, as were the explanations accompanying certain exhibits, and the wall mottoes advising you that "Creation Assimilates but Never Imitates" and that "The Horizontal Line is the Earth Line of Human Life." Here, in short, was the generic American original, the man who works pretty much alone, becomes an extreme innovator in order that his genius may survive at all, and works hard at being a prophet, pedagogue, and showman as well. The best examples of the type are provided by our literature; and one of Wright's distinctions is that he brought the originating power of a Poe or a Whitman into the less favored region of American plastic design.

Equally a part of the native tradition is Wright's absorption in natural forms and energies. This feeling for nature he succeeds in imparting to the very contours and surfaces of his houses, in such a way that they themselves appear to be in love with the adjacent

trees and waters. At least they frequently suggest the pond-side retreats of latter-day—and quite prosperous—Thoreaus. No doubt a principle of simple harmony between artifice and nature is at the root of Wright's design, as in his famous "prairie houses" with their strongly accentuated horizontals. In many cases, however, his effects seem to be wrung from what might be called a complex harmony, an equilibrium achieved in the face of some hard challenge. In this connection, one thinks of his factory interiors, in which tree-like supports and dappled lighting create a sort of metaphorical forest. Above all, one thinks of those houses of his which straddle a waterfall or dominate an ocean cliff or assert themselves among the strange organic presences of the desert.

The Wright show was housed in a temporary structure annexed to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Memorial Museum on upper Fifth Avenue. For this museum, which overlooks Central Park and the skyscraper-mirroring Reservoir, Wright has designed a particularly festive building—plans are on view—which will soon occupy the same site. Meanwhile, the museum has a new director, James Johnson Sweeney; and a number of fine modern paintings, discovered in its vaults, have supplemented the former rather monotonous display of Kandinskys and Bauers. With its new attractions, the Guggenheim Museum should help to relieve the strain on The Museum of Modern Art, which great crowds continue to invade daily. At that museum the principal event of the autumn was an extensive showing of Fernand Léger's work. For the most part, appreciation of this French modernist has been confined to the more independent critics and connoisseurs. The larger public has not responded as warmly to him as it has at various times to Braque, Miró, and Klee, and as it does rather consistently to Picasso and Matisse. No doubt Léger's austere color and his avoidance of fantasy and picturesque detail tend to chill the average spectator. Nor has he any of Wright's (or Picasso's) personal showmanship; during his wartime stay here Léger's presence was scarcely felt beyond the studio world. Hence the Modern Museum's conscientious review of his long career was especially welcome; and while it did not set the Fifth Avenue shops to designing fabrics and decorating windows in his honor, it did bring him an unusual amount of attention from public and critics alike. In a calmly admiring article in *Partisan Review*, Clement Greenberg praised Léger's exceptional poise and clarity; he wrote that Léger, almost alone among the original Cubists, has retained that "enthusiasm for machine forms" and "mood of secular optimism" which characterized the beginnings of modernism; and "he has succeeded better, I daresay, than any other in making the rawness of matter wholly relevant to human feeling." The Léger exhibition was seen earlier at Chicago's Art Institute, where it was organized.

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The season in music uncovered no very striking new talents and no bright novelties in the way of scores. It

produced, however, a few distinguished events, among them the New York Philharmonic's performance of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, the Choral Society's rendering of Berlioz's *Enfance du Christ*, and an especially fine interpretation of Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* with the composer leading the Philadelphia Orchestra. The season at the Metropolitan Opera House opened with *Faust* as it has done so many times in the past that even the attempts to be funny about it—such as naming the Met the *Faustspielhaus*—have become a little tedious. But this year the *Faust* was not, in respect to the staging, the same old musty, medieval spectacle that it has been. Rudolf Bing, the General Manager, had added a new version of Gounod's opera to his now considerable repertory of remodeled classics. The work of an English director, Peter Brook, and a French designer, Rolf Gerard, the new *Faust* unfolds in an atmosphere of Paris in 1840 with Mephistopheles impersonating a top-hatted *boulevardier*. Learned arguments were brought forth in support of the change. Was not Gounod's score intensely of 1840, his thought contemporary with that of Balzac and Stendhal? What audiences saw, however, was a very pretty show, enlivened by music which remained incorrigibly familiar, whatever its period; nor did Mephistopheles seem, in any qualitative sense, the basso equivalent of Rastignac and Julien Sorel. Very much more profitable were Bing's new productions of certain other operas, the musical values of which are still fresh and challenging. His *Tannhäuser* was in every way brilliant and his *Pelléas et Melisande* was very likely the best production of that opera ever seen here. The presence in its repertory of these two works alone, not to mention the current *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, gives the Metropolitan Opera House a kind of glory.

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December saw the passing of a playwright who, in the 'twenties, transformed the American theater and contributed to the enviable air of purposeful excitement then prevailing in New York. But Eugene O'Neill had fallen on evil days. Spent with disease, estranged from his wife and children, he died in a Boston hotel room, attended only by a nurse and a doctor. His work, moreover, although it was still honestly admired by theater professionals, no longer commanded much attention from audience or readers. His very conception of a theater of ideas was extinct—no doubt his own example as a thinker had helped to do it in, since he had more of ideology than of philosophy, and was rather improvident of gloom. What is probably the best recent estimate of him, an essay by Eric Bentley, is ominously entitled "On Trying to Like O'Neill." He left in manuscript an autobiographical play called *The Long Day's Journey into Night*. It cannot be performed or published till 1978.

Yet O'Neill continues to stand out by reason of his great powers of invention and his concern with themes of the widest interest. As Edmund Wilson has observed: "He nearly always, with whatever crudeness, is expressing some

real experience, some impact directly from life. The characters and the scene in O'Neill are sometimes forbiddingly bleak . . . but they are likely at any moment, by taking on the power and the awfulness of naked natural forces, to establish a violent contact between them and us." In the plays seen on Broadway today, this species of contact is seldom experienced; except in O'Neill's work, it was seldom experienced in O'Neill's own day. Usually the impact is not "directly from life" but from other plays or from novels.

But not invariably, of course. Broadway commands a good deal of talent today, and despite the customary charge of commercialism, is ready to give a hearing to unusual plays and obscure writers. One may be permitted to doubt that any first-rate dramas are being kept from production. And in addition to the standard Broadway houses, there are several smaller theaters in the Greenwich Village vicinity—the Circle in the Square, where spectators sit around the stage, is the best known of them—which are receptive to experimental work. A great talent like O'Neill's could probably find a producer somewhere.

But no one pretends that the autumn season in the theater was notable. Strangely absent were even those important revivals and ingenious big musicals which have given substance to past years. No Shaw or Sophocles or Shakespeare, and no *Guys and Dolls* or *South Pacific*. Yet if none of the offerings was outstanding as a whole, several plays proved to have well-written scenes and winning portraits. One very popular play was *Tea and Sympathy*, by Robert Anderson; it was about a schoolboy who, suffering under an imputation of homosexuality, is vindicated and restored to happiness by his headmaster's kindly wife. A much tougher and funnier schoolboy drama, laid in a military academy, was *End as a Man*, which Calder Willingham dramatized from his novel of the same title. Then there was a distinct oddity in the shape of a play about the United Nations; called *The Prescott Proposals*, and starring Katharine Cornell, it was, however, mainly a thriller with a background of international politics. And there were three plays on what may almost be described as a speciality of the season: the plight of old ladies. *The Solid Gold Cadillac*, about an elderly woman's adventures in the world of big business, was content to work the subject for laughs, as it was perhaps bound to do seeing that the infallible comedienne Josephine Hull was its star. Another and rather short-lived play, *The Trip to Bountiful*, by Horton Foote, was memorable for its portrait of an aging and homesick mother, acted by the great Lillian Gish. But the grimmest of these dramas of superannuated femininity was one in which Dorothy Parker had a hand. *Ladies of the Corridor*, as it was called, had for its setting one of those residential hotels, to be found in all our cities, which give shelter to women who have outlived their husbands and their social usefulness but not their incomes. In the lonely futility of their lives, Mrs. Parker's old ladies were mostly a bad lot, preying on each other, their dependents and themselves. As a whole, the play did not quite come off, and was withdrawn after several

weeks. But some of it was very good in a macabre way; and the authors seemed to be always on the verge of an important discovery, which their too strict intention of social satire kept them from quite making. What their best scenes implied is that old age, bringing with it a certain immunity to practical pressures, can release in people a real genius, if not for goodness then for eerie mischief, and in both cases for uninhibited self-expression. In a fiercely practical world, perhaps the old are our Othellos and Clytemnestras.

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A novel which is mostly about Chicago, Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March*, has made more trouble among the New York critics than any book published in recent years. It nevertheless won the National Book Award for 1953, an important prize offered jointly by the American Book Publishers Council, American Booksellers Association, and the Book Manufacturers Institute. Bellow's own youth was spent in Chicago; but he has since lived in a variety of places, including New York, Mexico, and Europe, and is at present a teacher of literature in a small New York State college. The author of two excellent novels, *Dangling Man* and *The Victim*, Bellow was expected to produce something still more remarkable, and so perhaps to move into the ranks of Hemingway and Robert Penn Warren. And when *Augie March* appeared early last autumn, it was reviewed very thoroughly and emotionally in the press and was read by enough people to make it for some weeks a best seller. But those critics who anticipated another carefully-wrought metaphysical thriller like *The Victim* were disappointed. At first glance, *The Adventures of Augie March* is neither carefully wrought nor metaphysical. It is as recklessly episodic as some old narrative by Smollett; and just as Bellow departs from the structural sophistication of such reigning models as Henry James, so he defies their moral inwardness by supplying a great deal of frankly physical excitement. That this defiance was intentional was revealed in an extremely outspoken interview with Bellow published in *The New York Times* when the book appeared. In the currently fashionable term, *Augie March* is "picaresque."

Among Bellow's critics there was this much agreement: his hero, born of immigrant parents, passionately eager for experience, alternately confused and clear sighted in his head-on encounter with the national temptations and realities, is supposed to be a kind of composite American. But reviewers differed widely, and shrilly, as to the meaning of Augie's story, not to mention its merits. In a notably acid review in *The New Yorker*, Anthony West described the book as "a schizoid novel," intent on being both popular and highbrow, and filled with the grossest pessimism. "His All-America Everyman has received bad news, from Freud, from Marx, and from Dewey. There is no innocence, free enterprise is impurity itself, and there are no absolutes." West sounded as if he were exposing a crime; and a very young critic, Norman Podhoretz, writing in *Commentary*, was more temperate but scarcely less severe.

On the other hand, Bellow found several influential champions, including Lionel Trilling and Delmore Schwartz. In *Partisan Review*, Schwartz wrote that *The Adventures of Augie March* is "a new kind of book, first of all because Augie March possesses a new attitude towards experience in America: instead of the blindness of affirmation and the poverty of rejection, Augie March rises from the streets of the modern city to encounter the reality of experience with an attitude of satirical acceptance, ironic affirmation, the comic transcendence of affirmation and rejection."

Since "the reality of experience" is a familiar phrase of James Joyce's, Schwartz perhaps intended to suggest that Bellow's feeling for his fellow countrymen was richly ambivalent like Joyce's feeling for his fellow Irishmen. And certainly Bellow's image of Chicago recalls Joyce's Dublin, not only in the amazing vividness with which it is created (few critics denied this), but also in the mixture of horror and affection with which it is viewed; if Bellow's Chicago seems more corrupt, that is because it is more powerful as well.

No doubt Bellow also owes something to the example, if not the actual work, of William Faulkner. Faulkner's intense localism has long inspired other writers of the American South; recently, his energy and will, together with his habit of wry "affirmation" (another fashionable word), have begun to infect Northern writers as well. Last autumn *Life* magazine featured for its millions of readers a two-part article on the extremely reticent novelist. Called "The Private World of William Faulkner," the article was plentifully illustrated with photos of Faulkner, his family, friends, dogs, home town, and native fields and streams; and because Oxford, Mississippi, where Faulkner lives and has almost always lived, is also the lightly-disguised scene of most of his novels, the article was of first-rate interest to readers and scholars alike. Its author, Robert Coughlan, who is little known in literary circles, somehow succeeded in penetrating Faulkner's reserve, as well as that of his relatives and townsmen, and so unearthed a lot of unknown, or only vaguely suspected, facts concerning Faulkner's parentage, his marriage, and his relations with a community which, in his novels, he has so often pictured as decadent and brutal. Best of all, Coughlan described in detail the desperate and wayward years of Faulkner's youth in the 'twenties, when he sometimes walked the streets of Oxford barefoot, often squatted for hours in a drugstore reading magazines and listening to gossip, wrote dozens of stories which no one printed, and earned from his townsmen the traditional term of half-affectionate abuse, Count No 'count. Even in those days, however, as Coughlan shows, Faulkner experienced something like a real apprenticeship. A member of the Royal Canadian Air Force during the First World War, he had later visited Paris and New York; and among his Oxford friends was a slightly older and very cultivated man, Phil Stone, now a well-known lawyer in the same town, who encouraged Faulkner to write, instructed him in Southern history, and got him to read a number of highly advanced books, including Joyce's *Ulysses*. And then in

New Orleans, Faulkner had the good luck of meeting Sherwood Anderson, who encouraged him further and also got him published. Although Faulkner chose to remain in Oxford, and has become a house-owner and family man as well as a renowned author, he is portrayed by Coughlan as anything but a serene rural sage. "His is not a split personality," Coughlan writes, "but rather a fragmented one, loosely held together by some strong inner force, the pieces often askew and sometimes painfully in friction . . . He acts like a farmer who has read Plato, and looks like a river gambler."

BOAS ON MALRAUX

GASSNER ON KRUTCH

KLUCKHOHN ON KINSEY AND DE BEAUVOIR

The Voices of Silence: Man and His Art
BY ANDRÉ MALRAUX.
Translated by Stuart Gilbert.
Garden City, New York, 1953, Doubleday, $25.00; London, 1954, Secker and Warburg, 15 guineas.
Les Voix du Silence. Paris, 1951, Gallimard.

When *La Psychologie de l'Art* began to appear in 1947, it was clear that an authoritative voice was speaking. This was not simply another example of scholarly and pedantic research into origins and influences, but the response to works of art by a sensitive, indeed passionate, mind. *The Voices of Silence*, which I have compared almost page for page with the earlier work, though based upon it and containing many of the same ideas, is, as its publishers say, a different work, more condensed and indeed clearer in its underlying philosophy. Its excellence is the same: illustrations which actually illustrate the text, brilliant flashes of insight which provoke the reader's imagination, an extraordinary, if not unique, knowledge at first hand of the paintings which are discussed, and the expression of an obvious absorption of them into a single consciousness.

The basic philosophy of this work might be summarized as follows: (1) artists are individual men, not spokesmen nor products of a period, a nation, a culture, a social class, or an aesthetic school; (2) all men live in time, are historical beings, not inhabitants of an eternal world; (3) the work of art is not bound to visual experience as its representation, but is independent of it and a world in itself; (4) the artist begins by

looking not at Nature but at other works of art; (5) the creation of a picture is the expression of a style, which is always a personal and formal manner of interpretation; (6) the idea of eternity has passed into the idea of history. If one consolidates these theses into a logical scheme, the central doctrine of the book will emerge. But, it is true, it will emerge without its emotional power or poetic overtones.

One can easily see that if artists are individuals, their task cannot be to exemplify abstract ideas or aesthetic theories, to manifest their allegiance to anything other than the demands of their own personality. Though M. Malraux does not make this explicit, doubtless because he thought it was obvious, there are some human beings to whom fidelity to a tradition is more important than self-assertion. Such men, he would maintain, are the followers, not the leaders, the De Predis, not the Leonardos. If we still possessed all the pictures and sculptures ever made, we should of course see that there are many more disciples than masters and it may very well be that the desire for self-submission is more powerful than the desire for self-assertion. And it may also be true that a society in which everyone was an individual with a style of his own would be chaotic, for social coherence is created by the individual's willing submission to an authority which he believes to be above himself. This authority may be simply that of custom. But it may also be that of God. Nevertheless, one has only to wander through the *Museum without Walls* to wake up to the hard fact that the works on display are not all alike. They are not sea shells, nor birds' nests, nor spider webs, a mere glance at which will identify the species, though not the individual, which made them. M. Malraux writes as if this were his central problem.

If man lives in time, the artist as well as the nonartist, then clearly no two moments of history can be absolutely identical. For a later moment has its memories of an earlier. Like *durée réelle* in the philosophy of Bergson, the present always contains the past. History is thus not like a string of beads on a chain, each period cut off from all others, but a process in which the past continues into the present and future and therefore can make its influence felt as if it were not past. But that influence, except on the plane of matter, works its effects through human minds. How then does the mind transmute what it has taken over from the past? Regardless of what an individual may believe, no one is neutral, the world is *filtered*, to use M. Malraux's term. First, the filter may be simply the inherited system of painting, as we see in the early works of such painters whose early works survive. Second, a personal filter begins to operate, the schema "which led to Tintoretto's first stridencies, to the first stairway under which Rembrandt placed a philosopher in the light falling from a dormer window, the first Gothic accent in El Greco's art." Finally only a little is left of the original schema and the mature product of an artist manifests a style "only when it has segregated a coherent, *personal* whole." Some artists never reach that final point, but live in only minor details of their canvases. It is this insistence on the personal element in art which

indicates its autonomy. As we go over the complete work of a man, we can see the gradual emphasis on his style which prevents us from mistaking his problem for that of simple representation. The last Tintorettos, like the last quartets of Beethoven, hark back to the earlier works; but what was traditional in the earlier is bit by bit eliminated until we come to the later. M. Malraux gives us a striking illustration of this point in his pages on the development of El Greco. One could of course exemplify the same process in the work of Renoir or of James Joyce.

It is by looking at works of art that painters acquire that similitude of style which establishes in the minds of critics and historians the notions of period and school. Such similitudes are the links between artist and artist, and between groups of artists as well, and are the evidence by means of which we speak of the growth or development of a style. But M. Malraux gives us at least hints of why changes occur, in his constant references to those ideas, religious for the most part, which have changed men's minds. The section on the *Metamorphoses of Apollo* is a beautiful example of the ingression of religious ideas into the history of forms. Here is a pictorial form, incorporated in the statues of Apollo, which is transported into the East via Gandara. There it gradually becomes the meditative heads of the Buddhas, whereas in the West it becomes the Pantocrator. To see this dual history in a synthetic glance has been the author's achievement. For as he says, "The history of Buddhist art is primarily that of the conquest of immobility. Christendom is dominated by the tragic picture of an execution; Buddhism by the tranquil picture of a meditation." The Buddhist wished a god whose eyes would be closed to the sensual world, the Christian one who would have created it and would judge it. When one reflects upon these contrasts, one begins to see, however obscurely, the infiltration into the artist's mind of a host of ideas, philosophic and religious, of which he need not be aware. He is painting Meditation or Judgment, rather than the Buddha or Christ. But is Meditation to be present only in a head with lowered eyelids? Are there not landscapes, gestures, lines, colors, and masses which will do as well? The calm and immobility of a Sung landscape, once its ideological formation is known, can be a substitute for a theology as well as for a god. And it is this substitution which M. Malraux is so amazingly able to suggest to us.

He often does it by illustrating works of art in detail, rather than by reproducing them in their entirety. Out of four-hundred-odd black and white illustrations, over ninety are of details and many others are mutilated statues or heads. This is analogous to the practice of critics of literature when they cite single lines of poetry to exemplify a poet's style. But in M. Malraux's case, the practice is the more impressive since the history of Western art is also the history of a growing concern with detail. One has only to think of how detail became of interest in itself to see this: first, the landscape without figures; then the still life; then the abstraction from the still life; then the lines of force and tension originally present in gesture and stable patterns; and finally the patch of

color as in Miro. This steady transformation of painting until in the works of a man like the early Kandinsky we have nothing but the form of color in motion is justified by the theorist in terms of psychology. The inner reaches of the mind are said to emerge upon the conscious level and those inarticulate drives which are supposedly found in children, savages, and the insane, become the dominant force in art. This can be called the liberation of the artist from the conventions of his society, for just as we are now capable of appreciating folk art and the art of children, so we have learned to see exotic art as an integral part of our Museum without Walls.

There is much here which is disputable and in any event it is the barest outline of one of the richest books which it has been my good fortune to read. I have said nothing of those brilliant flashes of wit which illuminate almost every page like colored balls shooting out of a Roman candle. One could construct an anthology of sentences and groups of sentences which would stir the imagination as great lines of poetry do. The very opening sentence of the book is a program: "A Romanesque crucifix was not regarded by its contemporaries as a work of sculpture; nor Cimabue's *Madonna* as a picture. Even Pheidias' *Pallas Athene* was not, primarily, a statue." The following contains in itself the whole of modern art: "The 'subject' was bound to disappear, because a new subject was coming to the fore, to the exclusion of all others, and this new subject was the presence of the artist himself upon his canvas." From Courbet to Miro we see the artist occupying more and more of the picture's space. And what could so compactly state a philosophy as this: "The driving force of St. Francis's teachings lay in their humanization of grief and their treatment of sorrow not only as a link between man and God, with Christ as mediator, but also as a fraternal bond between all men." Nor could one find a better distinction between the art of a child and the art of an artist than this: "A child is often artistic; he is not an artist. For his gift controls him; not he his gift." Each of these statements occurs at the end of a line of thought not as a detached epigram announced, as it were, to convince the reader of the author's brilliance.

Finally what M. Malraux has given us here is an attempt to elucidate the psychology of the artist, not of the spectator. He is probably too sure that the "we" who he says feels, thinks, maintains, sees, and so on, is coincidental in his insights with the artist. For the truth is more likely to be that even if his description of genius and artistic insight is correct, the gap between the artist and "we" is greater than it ever was. For he seems to have forgotten that no past age is ever lost but lives on in some stratum of society. Aestheticians are too prone to accept their own views as paradigms for all mankind and Malraux is not immune to that weakness. History, to be accurate, must be thick enough to include the various levels of taste, to explain, or at least to expound, survivals as well as innovations, for frequently it is the conflict between tradition and novelty which produces the total culture of a time.

But one cannot ask for more than has been given. It is not too much to say that the enthusiasm with which *La Psychologie de l'Art* was received will be repeated when *The Voices of Silence* is more generally read. One may doubt whether the half-intimated, half-stated prophecy that modern art is a universal language will be actualized. For painting as an art may be obsolescent and music may be taking its place.

—*George Boas*

"*Modernism*" *in Modern Drama*

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

New York, 1953, Cornell University Press, $2.75.

The subtitle of Joseph Wood Krutch's "*Modernism*" *in Modern Drama* is "A Definition and an Estimate," and both the definition and the estimate may come as a shock to those of us who have considered the modern theater one of the outposts of humanitarian idealism. Mr. Krutch combines the knowledge of an informed drama critic and the perspectives of a lay philosopher in this brief survey consisting of six chapters originally delivered as lectures at Cornell University in 1952. Mr. Krutch notes two tendencies in the modern drama since Ibsen's middle period. The first represents a drastic and largely deplorable break with the past, the second a partial return to tradition that has not as yet given the critic any strong reason for revising his rather jaundiced view of modernism and its works.

Inevitably, Mr. Krutch uses Ibsen as a springboard for his disclosure on the state of the theater. Ibsen is the first dramatic modernist because he disavows the utility of the past as a basis for the future and posits the belief that "there is no such thing as an unqualified, unchanging truth." An "all-inclusive relativity" is the gospel of modernism, and Ibsen is its most influential proponent. Once this view gains currency, whether in the theater or in the larger world reflected on the stage, we are on the brink of the "disintegration of an intellectual and spiritual world."

With Strindberg, next, dramatic modernism gives wide recognition to the dominance of irrationalism in human reality, a view that carries the modernist far indeed from Aristotle's premise that "man is a reasoning animal." Ibsen at least sought a rational solution for man's situation. Strindberg found none when he dramatized the sex duel between man and woman. A harmonization of conflicting interests is not within the purview of modernism, whether it addresses itself to psychological or to social problems. In Ibsen's world social evils are remediable, individual responsibility is uppermost, and judgments can therefore be passed on humanity. In Strindberg's world the evil is imbedded in human nature, individual responsibility is irrelevant, and judgment is replaced by a "Dionysian fury." Mr. Krutch finds "Strindbergism" in solution in most serious modern works: "Nearly all seem to proclaim that man is, to sometimes lesser and sometimes greater degree, an irrational animal."

An interesting chapter on Shaw carries the critic's evaluation of the modern dilemma further. Although

Mr. Krutch acknowledges Shaw's optimistic interest in social reform, he places great stress on the conclusion in *Back to Methuselah* that "man as we know him is not smart enough to save himself." For Mr. Krutch this view negates Shaw's Fabian version of Marxism as expressed, for instance, in *Major Barbara*. In Chekhov's plays the critic finds other instances of negativism, since Chekhov presents the absurdity or pathos of modern man and notes the passing of the old world without inspiring any particular faith in the future. And in the work of Pirandello, a dramatist who is even more obviously a modernist, negation becomes still more apparent, for the author of *Six Characters in Search of an Author* dissolves the ego. His is "the most inclusive denial of all," for Pirandello denies the more or less consistent personality usually attributed to individuals.

In his estimate of the Irish theater, Mr. Krutch maintains that its resistance to Ibsenism was of short duration. He cites as evidence O'Casey's powerful realistic plays, which he characterizes as "one, long, unresolved dissonance." Only in the final chapter on American drama does the critic discover some tendency to assert man's confidence in his own importance and responsibility. This conclusion is derived chiefly from the fact that O'Neill and Maxwell Anderson have remained loyal to tragic form, for tragedy confers dignity upon man. Since European modernism abandoned or destroyed tragic art, Mr. Krutch considers O'Neill and Anderson approvably "anti-modernist." In his view the major plays of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams also approach the estate of tragedy, although he finds "pluralism" in *Death of a Salesman* (the responsibility for fate is here divided between society and the individual) and "ambiguity" in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Yet even in this chapter Mr. Krutch arrives at the conclusion that "a civilized man is likely to find it increasingly difficult to live in either the physical or the spiritual world which has been gradually evolving." The modern world has become uncongenial to the main premises associated with civilization—namely, that man is a creature capable of dignity and that men may live most fruitfully in the realm of rationality.

Mr. Krutch does not single out the drama as more culpable than any other branch of modern literature. But he does not exempt it from a tendency "to undermine the foundations of post-Renaissance civilization." His book, written with the intelligence and clarity that have characterized all his previously published books, is not so much a work of dramatic criticism as an expression of one highly civilized man's sense of alienation in a world that has tended to defeat his humanistic values. As a humanist's testament and protest "*Modernism*" *in Modern Drama* merits respectful consideration even by one who, like myself, is not always completely convinced by the analysis of particular plays or playwrights and would have preferred a less general discussion.

One cannot lay this book aside, however, without inquiring whether its argument does not reflect the disillusionment of contemporary intellectuals more than it actually reflects the modern

theater. Determinists of the Naturalist dispensation, who naïvely took their gospel from nineteenth-century mechanistic science, tried to create drama as if Taine's statement that "vice and virtue are products like sugar and vitriol" were a principle of art. Early Marxists made a dogma of social determinism, while latter-day Stalinism shackled the drama, along with the other arts, to social utilitarianism and propaganda. Pseudo-Freudian zealots reduced dramatic characters to complexes and sometimes turned the theater into a clinic. Mr. Krutch, who himself succumbed to psycho-analytical biography in *Edgar Allen Poe: A Study in Genius* in 1926, reviewed the effect of modern trends quite thoroughly in *The Modern Temper* in 1929, already concluding in that book that the scientific attitude was unfavorable to tragic art. Nevertheless, a strong case can also be made for the humanistic affirmativeness of the modern drama and theater. Both can be shown to have arisen out of a desire to serve humanity rather than to negate it, and to expand intellectual horizons rather than to limit them. Modern dramatic art often, indeed, has tried to pluck some assurance or faith out of the nettles of modern life; and taking note of a brier patch and trying to cut a path through it is not the same thing as embracing it.

Ibsen rejected pinchbeck moralism only in order to affirm the higher morality of responsible individualism. Strindberg, for all his subjective "irrationalism," achieved considerable understanding of human nature; and for all his turbulence, Strindberg sought the cessation of conflict and the peace of blessedness in Buddhist and Christian faith. There was wholesomeness as well as disease in his strivings. Concerning expressionism, Mr. Krutch states brilliantly: "If you are going to say that life is meaningless, you cannot effectively say it in a play where the play itself constitutes meaning; the violence and confusion of the play must express the violence and confusion it proclaims." Yet Strindberg used expressionism in *To Damascus* to enforce a search for integration and love, and he turned *The Ghost Sonata* into a protest against soul-corruption, and *The Dream Play* into a poem of pity for mankind. And it can be shown that such expressionist plays as Toller's *Man and the Masses*, Karel Capek's *R.U.R.*, and O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* affirmed human ideals in the very process of representing the failure to live up to them—a failure not actually noted more conclusively by the modernists than by the Greek tragedians, Shakespeare, and Racine, not to mention John Webster and other minor Elizabethans.

There is also as much validity in maintaining that Chekhov restored dignity to men in *Uncle Vanya*, *The Sea Gull*, and *The Three Sisters* as that he noted their contradictions and ineptitudes; and that O'Casey decidedly mastered the dissonances of Dublin life with his anger and pity. Shaw may have abandoned his belief in reform, but the brilliant reasoning in his plays proves that he never abandoned his belief in reason. Although Naturalism was a deterministic philosophy, naturalistic art gave rise to Stanislavskian theater, which represents the very summit of individualization and character-creation

on the stage. And the very proliferation of "problem plays" in the theater can be offered as evidence that many modern playwrights believed in the power of right reason and good will. It may be maintained that if dramatists of previous periods made the rare, exceptional individual the symbol of man's potentialities, their nineteenth- and twentieth-century successors predicated potentialities for the common man. If this assumption does not guarantee the creation of good art, it is at least a good working principle for democracy, as well as for modern humanism.

One may conclude, then, that the thesis of "*Modernism*" *in Modern Art* has the limited validity of one incisive, if also somewhat aristocratically fastidious, viewpoint, which the author himself presents with qualifications. If the provocativeness of this viewpoint is beyond question, its comprehensiveness is not. A more balanced view would accept Mr. Krutch's analysis but would set beside it its antithesis. The two positions could then be reconciled by the proposition that modern drama has existed in a tension between affirmation and rejection of humanistic principles and has been shaped by it, for better and worse, into an art acutely expressive of modern realities. Mr. Krutch's thesis cannot be rejected. But it can be supplemented and amended.

—*John Gassner*

Sexual Behavior in the Human Female

BY KINSEY, POMEROY, MARTIN AND GEBHARD.

Philadelphia, 1953, Saunders, $8.00.
London, 1953, Saunders, 50s.

The Second Sex

BY SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR.
Translated by H. M. Parshley

New York, 1953, Knopf, $10.00.
London, 1953, Cape, 50s.
Le Deuxième Sexe, Paris, 1949, Gallimard.

These two books tell us almost as much about the cultural traditions from which they emerge as they do about women. *The Second Sex* is humanistic, beautifully written except for some existentialist jargon, set in a deep historical perspective, broadly synthetic. Save for some biology, however, it is not "scientific." The data are selected to fit the author's theory which, we may suspect, existed before she began her research. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* is self-consciously "scientific" and crammed with data examined systematically in accord with a scheme that is explicitly stated. The book abounds in jargon of another variety and is often turgidly and tediously written. In spite of a good deal of learnedly documented comparative material, Kinsey and his coauthors do not appear to have much sense for history. And their canvas is largely delimited to biology and behavior, though there is more psychology than in their earlier volume.

There are trends in contemporary French culture, of course, other than those represented by de Beauvoir. Nor does the Indiana University group typify everything in American intellectual life. Yet the two books do symbolize, almost to the point of parody, some dominant and distinctive features of the two ways of life. De Beauvoir is

subtle and polished; she is aware of the massiveness of the civilization of which she is an heir; she has an almost morbidly sensitive comprehension of the complexity of things; she is cynical and bitter. Kinsey's book is not merely about Americans—it is an intensely American book. There is the Anglo-American hunger for "the facts." There is the American delight in gadgetry: in this case statistical gadgetry. There is the American conviction that enough knowledge, and especially scientific knowledge, can solve all problems. And this conviction is as passionate as it is sometimes naïve. Presumably this is one of the powerful motives that have induced thousands of Americans to open up their private lives to strangers.

Simone de Beauvoir integrates—without a trace of the scrapbook technique of scholarly eclectics—the most variegated strands of history, philosophy, economics, biology, belles-lettres, sociology, and anthropology. The style is never tiresome, and the content is seasoned with bits of malice. Historical materialism and psychoanalysis both enter into her theory, but she challenges Communist and Freudian orthodoxy alike:

> Historical materialism takes for granted facts that call for explanation . . . we reject for the same reasons both the sexual monism of Freud and the economic monism of Engels.

The fundamental theoretical view is, expectably, existentialist:

> In our attempt to discover woman we shall not reject certain contributions of biology, of psychoanalysis, and of historical materialism; but we shall hold that the body, the sexual life, and the resources of technology exist concretely for man only in so far as he grasps them in the total perspective of his existence. The value of muscular strength, of the phallus, of the tool can be defined only in a world of values; it is determined by the basic project through which the existent seeks transcendence.

Women throughout history have been a disadvantaged group like the proletariat. The concept of "the eternal feminine" has as much validity as those of "the Black soul" and "the Jewish character." On the other hand, women are on the whole inferior to men today because their *situation* affords them fewer possibilities. Women have been overly cautious and conservative on economic and political matters. The dictators of the twentieth century have obtained their strongest support from women. The free woman is just being born. She does not exist at present in the U S S R any more than in France or in the United States. Changes in the economic condition of women constitute a necessary but not a sufficient condition for freedom.

De Beauvoir, in the reviewer's opinion, is too intellectualistic. She underestimates the extent to which women can be creative and "free" through the exercise of household responsibilities which need not be nearly as demeaning or "enslaving" as filing the same kinds of papers day after day in an office or repeating endlessly the same routines in a factory. If one presses some of the author's statements to their logical extremes, it would seem that she wanted and thought it possible that *all* women should become artists or intellectuals. We know, both from biology and from the necessary division of labor in all societies, that neither all men nor all women have such potentialities. Nor do they want to have them.

Moreover, de Beauvoir seems unaware of the number of values, precious to both sexes, which would be sacrificed to the radical social change she advocates. And "equality" is not the only corrective to "superiority-inferiority." Sometimes both members of a pair can possess "superiority"—in contrasting spheres. "Harmony in contrariety—as in the case of the bow and the lyre."

For a good many years Dr. Alfred Kinsey, a zoologist at the State University of Indiana, and his associates have been investigating human sexual behavior. They have studied the literature, ancient and modern, on this subject in many languages. They have examined legal codes and observed conditions in penal institutions and among deviant groups in large cities of the United States. However, their research is centered primarily upon private interviews with large numbers of Americans. They have asked all of their subjects a long series of questions the answers to which are recorded in code so that personalities disappear in statistical anonymity. More than sixteen thousand Americans have now given their sexual histories to the Kinsey project.

Sexual Behavior in the Human Female is based primarily upon a sample of 5,940 women with an age range of 2 to 90 years; 456 cases were born before 1900 and 784 in the first decade after 1900; 147 were pre-adolescent; 3,313 had never married at the time of the interview; 785 cases had been widowed, separated, or divorced; 56 per cent had some college background and 19 per cent had gone beyond college into graduate work; 69 per cent came from ten states which include some 47 per cent of the total population of this country.

The authors state that generalizations arrived at are least likely to be applicable to the following groups: Over 50 years; those with only grade school education; those with high school education who are over 40 years of age; previously married females, now widowed, separated, or divorced; all Catholic groups, especially among older females; devoutly Jewish groups; some laboring groups, especially among older females; all rural groups; groups originating in the Southeastern quarter of the country, from the Pacific Northwest and from the high plains and Rocky Mountain areas.

Some of the more striking of the conclusions reached in this study are the following: Women who have attained sexual orgasm prior to marriage appear to reach climax in marriage more frequently than those who come to marriage without this experience. This finding appears to hold regardless of what type of premarital sexual activity the women had engaged in. About half of this sample—which is most certainly not a random sample—had engaged in heterosexual intercourse before marriage. About a quarter of the married women had had extramarital intercourse before they had reached the age of forty. Women seemed to show more variation in sexual behavior than do the American men interviewed. Kinsey and his collaborators emphasize strongly the uniqueness of the sexual history of each individual. They find that American women are not conditioned as much as males by the attitudes of the social groups in which they live and by the sexual experiences which they have had. However, these authors failed to discover any anatomic or physiological

basis for the differences in the sexual behavior of men and women. They note that the levels of sexual response may be modified by reducing or increasing the amount of available hormones but they conclude that patterns of sexual behavior cannot at present be modified by hormone therapy.

Sexual Behavior in the Human Female is replete with statistical tables and with objective scientific statements. It contains excellent information on the social organization and cultural patterns of large sectors of the American population. Nevertheless, Kinsey and his associates are as much given to polemic, passion, and preaching in their way as is de Beauvoir in hers. American sexual mores need to be overhauled. Premarital intercourse and premarital "petting" make, on the whole, for more successful sexual adjustment in marriage. The comparatively greater variability of female sexual behavior and of its patterning must be recognized and respected.

Neither American statisticians nor American psychiatrists are entirely satisfied with Kinsey's methods. Yet this book, albeit humorless, is science, serious science, and science in the grand style. Except when they forget themselves and appear to speak about females of the human species in general, Kinsey and his coworkers do have a behavioral base and a sampling technique which give solid support to their more restrained generalizations. They do not use such terms as "many" and "few" as loosely as does de Beauvoir. She, for example, says:

> Many American women particularly are prepared to think that there is no longer any place for woman as such; if a backward individual still takes herself for a woman, her friends advise her to be psychoanalyzed and thus get rid of this obsession.

"Many?"—in respect to the total population? Perhaps in certain small circles in New York City and elsewhere. De Beauvoir's statement illustrates the superficiality of which French intellectuals can sometimes be guilty. She is brilliant, but her knowledge of American society and of American culture is extremely limited. On the other hand, de Beauvoir gives the reader a kind of enlightenment which one does not get from viewing human beings as animals who have orgasms at varying intervals and in varying ways. Actually, her book is primarily about sexuality rather than about economic, social, and political factors influencing female behavior.

Statistical tables on the incidence of various types of sexual acts are useful, and one must praise the courage, persistence, and ambitious sweep of the Kinsey study. We also need the philosophical sophistication, historical depth, and exquisite psychological sensibilities of a Simone de Beauvoir. Each approach is incomplete in itself. Both books represent massive conquests of portions of a vast territory previously entered only by a few hardy explorers who usefully reconnoitered some peripheral fringes. Yet these are very partial conquests. Both books overgeneralize. Both state or suggest as true always and everywhere what is probably true only of certain people at particular times and among particular groups. Both books show distortions and restrictions that are the products of the two distinct ways of life that produced these valuable studies.

—Clyde Kluckhohn

A SELECTIVE LISTING OF NEW BOOKS

Berger, Arthur: AARON COPLAND. New York, Oxford University Press, $3.50.

A compact guide to the life and works of one of America's most important modern composers. The first section is devoted to Copland's life, while the second and longer is an analysis of the development and techniques of the composer's principal compositions, amply illustrated by musical examples. An appendix provides a chronology of first performances, a list of recordings, and an exhaustive bibliography. An essay on Copland by Mr. Berger was published in *Perspectives* 1.

Caldwell, Erskine: THE COMPLETE STORIES OF ERSKINE CALDWELL. New York, Duell, Sloan & Pearce-Little, Brown, $5.00.

Ninety-six stories, by an author of unquestionable power and originality, which serve to reinforce critic Henry Seidel Canby's judgment that Caldwell is "primarily and essentially a short-story writer." Whereas in his more popular novels Caldwell frequently struggles with conflicting impulses, in these stories—whether humorous, tender, or cruel—he has achieved, in most cases, a directness and a sense of dramatic economy in writing of the right and the wrong in life.

Canby, Henry Seidel, et al. (editors): LITERARY HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. New York, The Macmillan Company, $9.00.

A revised edition in one volume of a work originally published in 1948. It would be hard to improve upon the literary or scholarly competence of the fifty-five contributors, who include Dixon Wecter, Carl Van Doren, H. S. Commager, R. P. Blackmur, Howard Mumford Jones, H. L. Mencken, and Malcolm Cowley. It is the conviction of the editors that each generation should reinterpret our literary history, defining the past in its own terms. This book most adequately performs that task.

Farrell, James T.: THE FACE OF TIME. New York, The Vanguard Press, Inc., $3.75.

In point of time this latest novel of Farrell's precedes his Danny O'Neill tetralogy and thus becomes an introduction to that series. The author's accurate ear and his retentive memory for his past have not failed him as he re-creates the saga of a lower-middle-class Irish family in Chicago's South Side during the early part of this century. Here is the world as experienced by five-year-old Danny O'Neill, living, with his grandparents and their children, an embattled existence of violence and spiritual poverty.

Hillway, Tyrus and Mansfield, Luther S. (editors): MOBY-DICK CENTENNIAL ESSAYS. Dallas, Texas, Southern Methodist Press, $3.75.

The year 1951 marked the hundredth anniversary of *Moby Dick's* publication; for this centennial the Melville Society has collected these nine papers on Herman Melville. Five of the essays, which analyze the underlying meaning of *Moby Dick*, represent such diverse opinions as that of Henry Murray, who sees in the figure of Ahab the embodiment of evil, and that of Tyrus Hillway, who takes an opposite view. The remaining four papers confine themselves to the less controversial realm of historical research.

Kraus, Michael: THE WRITING OF AMERICAN HISTORY. Norman, The University of Oklahoma Press, $5.50.

An exhaustive analysis of the whole field of American historiography from its very beginnings, based on the author's previously published *A History of American History* (1937), now completely rewritten and amplified to bring the work up to date. Mr. Kraus, who is Professor of History at New York City College, gives less attention to specialized histories—military, naval, diplomatic, constitutional, and religious—than to writers who deal with history more comprehensively.

Merton, Thomas: BREAD IN THE WILDERNESS. New York, New Directions, $6.00.

This is a book by a poet in poetic celebration of the Psalms. Not a systematic treatise, it is, rather, a collection of deeply-felt personal essays relating the theological impact of the religious joy which the constant chanting of the Psalter has brought to its author, a monk in the Trappist community of Kentucky.

Northrop, F. S. C. and Gross, Mason (editors): ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD: AN ANTHOLOGY. New York, The Macmillan Company, $12.50.

An anthology of selections from Whitehead which reflect the most diverse aspects of his philosophical thought. Since the collection is intended for the general reader, material concerned with mathematics and mathematical logic, despite the enormous importance of the philosopher's work in this field, has been largely eliminated; one exception is a paper representing an important early stage in the development of Whitehead's system: "On

Mathematical Concepts of the Material World," here reprinted in its entirety for the first time since 1906.

Soper, David Wesley: MAJOR VOICES IN AMERICAN THEOLOGY. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, $3.50.

An analysis of the life and thought of six leading American theologians, Edwin Lewis, Reinhold Niebuhr, Nels F. S. Ferre, Paul Tillich, H. Richard Niebuhr, and Robert L. Calhoun. Mr. Soper was for long convinced that there was no specifically American theology, but he now believes that there is such a theology, and that his six subjects are representative spokesmen.

Thompson, Manley: THE PRAGMATIC PHILOSOPHY OF C. S. PEIRCE. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, $5.75.

Peirce may not have been America's greatest philosopher, yet it is unquestionable that he was one of the most original thinkers ever produced in America. In the pragmatism of William James, his close friend and admirer, there was to some extent a vulgarization of Peirce's views. The present work is the most comprehensive exposition of his thought yet attempted. Although it is detailed and technical, it has the virtues of clarity and lucidity. And if Mr. Thompson does tend at times to make systematic what was chiefly speculative and tentative, nevertheless the reader can judge for himself, since the organic development of Peirce's philosophy is clearly elucidated.

Van Doren, Mark: NOBODY SAY A WORD AND OTHER STORIES. New York, Henry Holt and Company, $3.50.

A new collection of thirty-three stories written by a gifted poet and versatile man of letters. Mr. Van Doren is at his best when he invests his subjects with his strong feeling for nature and his insight into the timelessness of human emotions, as in the moving "The Lady Over The Wall."

Walser, Richard (editor): THE ENIGMA OF THOMAS WOLFE. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, $4.75.

This collection contains twenty-four essays in criticism, reminiscence, and biography on the novelist, and in addition an autobiographical sketch and a hitherto unpublished first chapter of an unfinished novel. Among the contributors are Maxwell Perkins, Wolfe's mentor and editor; Jonathan Daniels, Maxwell Geismar, Robert Penn Warren, Bernard De Voto, Clifton Fadiman, and Henry Seidel Canby. An extremely interesting judgment by William Faulkner is quoted in full by the editor in his preface: "We all failed, but Wolfe . . . made the best failure because he tried his best to get it all said . . . throwing away style, coherence, all the rules of preciseness . . . " The enigma to which the title refers is largely the extreme disagreement among critics in America as to Wolfe's rank as a novelist.

Weinstock, Herbert: MUSIC AS AN ART. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co., $6.50.

A serious and well-written attempt to deal with music as an art form which to

be fully apprehended and enjoyed must be intellectually understood. Mr. Weinstock, whose introduction to this book appeared in *Perspectives* 3, examines in detail, using twenty-one illustrated musical examples, the historical evolution of methods and techniques by which composers have organized sounds from the time of the Gregorian chant to that of contemporary atonality.

Weltfish, Gene: THE ORIGINS OF ART, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, $4.50.

A careful and detailed study, with many illustrations, a technical appendix, and a bibliography, of the beginning and the development of art in primitive man. Dr. Weltfish draws her examples from tribes of the Amazon and from the North American Indians, showing how the practical motive of art, the making of an efficient stone weapon or tool, provides the basis for an interest in design as such, representation in itself, abstraction, and symbolism.

White, E. B.: THE SECOND TREE FROM THE CORNER. New York, Harper's, $3.00.

Long a successful contributor and editorial writer for *The New Yorker*, E. B. White has collected together in this book those stories, poems, sketches, essays, and comments written over the last twenty years which he thinks will stand the test of time. What emerges is an enlightening excursion into some of the frustrating inanities of modern life, conducted by an urbane humorist and philosopher who is also a first-class essayist.

Williams, Tennessee: CAMINO REAL. New York, New Directions, $3.00.

A considerably revised version of the controversial play which both exasperated and enthralled American theatergoers when it was produced in 1953. Mr. Williams has strengthened his work by the introduction of new characters and scenes without, however, sacrificing any of the play's original phantasmagoric quality of human truth. Included are a preface, written by the author before the drama's production on Broadway, and an "afterword," which states his creed as an artist.

Wright, Frank Lloyd: THE FUTURE OF ARCHITECTURE. New York, The Horizon Press, $7.50.

Always lively and provocative, this collection of essays by the greatest living American architect contains his most important statements on design published during the last quarter-century. Of particular interest is the inclusion of several works long unavailable: "Modern Architecture" (The Princeton Lectures, 1930); "Two Lectures on Architecture" (The Chicago Art Institute, 1931); and "An Organic Architecture" (The London Lectures, 1939). Mr. Wright has written a closing chapter especially for this book which interprets his "organic" philosophy of architecture as he has developed it through sixty years of building. The finest examples of his unorthodox style are illustrated with photographs.

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A SELECTIVE LISTING FROM

AMERICAN PERIODICALS

THE AMERICAN SCENE

Ellis, John Tracy: CHURCH AND STATE. AN AMERICAN CATHOLIC TRADITION. *Harper's Magazine*, November, 1953.

This article, by a leading Catholic, asserts that the American hierarchy has always held, and still holds, that separation of Church and State in the U.S. is the practical solution of the age-old problem of the relation between the two, "and nowhere will the student of American history find that the Holy See has ever rebuked them for their stand." The article is well documented with quotations from Catholic authorities, from the eighteenth-century Bishop John Carroll down to writers of our own day.

MacLeish, Archibald: LOYALTY AND FREEDOM. *The American Scholar*, Autumn, 1953.

A stirring appeal for the preservation and restoration of freedom of opinion and expression in America—a country whose very existence is founded on such freedom—by restoring faith in freedom. This means restoring faith in man, which is an understanding of man. Under the current fears of Communist aggression or subversion "the underlying failure is a failure of education . . . Only those who know what a man can be at his best, in his arts, in his conceptions, in his imagination and his realization, are capable of valuing freedom, and only those who are capable of valuing freedom are likely to defend it."

ART

Berenson, Bernard: LORENZO LOTTO: RESULTING IMPRESSION. *Art News*, November, 1953.

This essay forms part of the concluding chapter of Mr. Berenson's forthcoming revised monograph on the Renaissance master. The "impression" results from the huge Lotto retrospective exhibition currently filling Venice's Ducal Palace.

Stravinsky, Igor: THE DIAGHILEV I KNEW. *The Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1953.

This portrait of the great master of the ballet, by his favorite composer, is "the fruit of nineteen years of close collaboration, of affection and mutual friendship." A vivid description of Diaghilev's character, his methods of working, the most dramatic incidents of his life and career. Diaghilev died in Venice, the city he loved most. During his last moments "he became delirious from fever and suddenly he began to sing. They were melodies of Tschaikovsky. Thus in delirium and at the threshold of eternity, he unconsciously recalled that which he had loved the most and which he never ceased loving."

CRITICISM

Eliot, T. S.: VERGIL AND THE CHRISTIAN WORLD. *The Sewanee Review*, Winter, 1953.

Analyzing the meaning of such keywords as *labor*, *pietas*, and *fatum* in the thought of Vergil, Eliot comes to the conclusion that of all poets, Roman and Greek, Vergil was the most "nearly Christian": *anima naturaliter Christiana.* In the process of elaborating this thought, the author gives us a series of acute and sensitive comments on the famous fourth *Eclogue*, on the *Georgics*, on several episodes of the *Aeneid*, on "prophecy" and "poetic inspiration."

Saroyan, William: SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT GERTRUDE STEIN. *The Reporter*, October 13, 1953.

Reviewing *The Flower of Friendship: Letters Written to Gertrude Stein*, William Saroyan conjures up a portrait of Miss Stein and the world she lived in.

Trilling, Lionel: FLAUBERT'S LAST TESTAMENT. *Partisan Review*, November–December, 1953.

A comprehensive critical essay on *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, the unfinished novel that occupied Flaubert's thought for the last eight years of his life.

West, Ray B., Jr.: PERSONAL HISTORY AND THE "FOUR QUARTETS." *New Mexico Quarterly*, Autumn, 1953.

T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* has been seen as predominately a religious poem. The present essay attempts to view it in a wider sense: with the philosophic concerns of our time, aesthetic and social as well as religious, at its center and, more than that, as an expression of "personal history," of autobiography and direct experience.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Dean, Arthur H.: THE BRICKER AMENDMENT AND AUTHORITY OVER FOREIGN AFFAIRS. *Foreign Affairs*, October, 1953.

A thorough, well-documented analysis of the relations between the legislative

and executive branches of government and between Federal Government and the States, with regard to the control of foreign affairs, as set down in the American Constitution; and of how these relations would be affected by the ratification of the Bricker Amendment. "The problem is simple and fundamental. It should not be reserved to lawyers to debate. The locus of power to formulate and execute the country's foreign policy was intentionally concentrated by the founding fathers in the Federal government, particularly in the President and Senate. The specific provisions of the Bricker Amendment are in sum a proposal radically to shift this constitutional ordering . . . by augmenting Congressional power and by requiring the necessary participation of the States for the execution of foreign policy in certain areas. The powers of a sovereign state would thus be emasculated."

Einaudi, Mario: EUROPE AFTER STALIN. *The Yale Review*, Autumn, 1953.

Today many Europeans feel, according to the author, that the Political Community should precede and not follow the Defense Community, and that in building the Political Community the goal of a European-wide political settlement should be kept firmly in mind. The question is whether we can accept this view without any damage to vital American interests, or, vice versa, whether we can reject it without running the risk of the disintegration of the Atlantic Alliance. Mr. Einaudi's advice is to accept the European position.

Mosely, Philip E.: THE KREMLIN'S FOREIGN POLICY SINCE STALIN. *Foreign Affairs*, October, 1953.

Mr. Mosely, who is Director of the American Institute at Columbia University, analyzes Russian policy in Iran, Turkey, Germany, and Korea in the light of current theories of Soviet weakness. He probes the relations between the Party, the political police, and the Army, from the days of Stalin's ascent to power to the present, and comes to the conclusion that "present evidence requires us to assume that the Soviet system is going to continue a tightly operated Party-dictatorship, though less personalized in a deified dictator. The new leadership . . . displays striking qualities of realism and flexibility. If this is so, then the challenge and the dangers which Soviet power and purposes present to the strength, cohesion and survival of the free world are definitely not on the wane, but are increasing."

HISTORY

Cairns, John C.: CLIO AND THE QUEEN'S FIRST MINISTER. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, October, 1953.

This is a careful analysis of Winston Churchill's philosophy of history as it can be traced in his voluminous writings and public speeches. "As a writer of history, the present has always been too much with him . . . As a seer into the future he is bound by romantic chains to the world of his individualist, militant, prosperous youth and by the crushing sense of the inevitable in the destructive capacities of the democratic

age, peopled with mass-men, led so often by helpless mediocrities or monstrous tyrants . . ." The essay is amply documented with quotations from that sweeping prose which recently was awarded the Nobel Prize.

PHILOSOPHY

Mora, José Ferrater: SUÁREZ AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, October, 1953.

Professor Mora traces the relations between "modern" philosophy and the philosophy of the Jesuits, especially the Spanish ones, of the Counter Reformation: ". . . the outstanding importance of Suárez was really due to the fact that he was the first to erect a systematic body of consistent metaphysics at a time when people seemed to want something more than a series of Aristotelian commentaries . . . or even than a vague sceptical philosophy." From this point of view the author draws the rather surprising conclusion that "the so-called philosophers of the Counter Reformation, and especially those who worked most actively in this field—the Jesuit philosophers—are *to a certain extent* modern philosophers."

SCIENCE

Moore, Ruth: EVOLUTION UP TO DATE. *Harper's Magazine*, November, 1953.

An account, written in plain language for the broad audience of a popular magazine, of recent developments in anthropology and genetics and the light they throw on the origin of man.

Nelson, Norman E.: SCIENCE AND THE IRRESPONSIBLE IMAGINATION. *The Yale Review*, Autumn, 1953.

A most spirited account of the havoc wrought by ill-conceived or maldigested scientific notions on literature and poetic imagination. Mr. Nelson believes that when critics and poets appeal to the authority and prestige of science to support their critical principles and poetic practice, they not only distort and misrepresent science but actually endanger the poetic values by providing such insecure support. Exposing some of the most glaring misunderstandings of modern physics by modern literati, he comes to the conclusion that "the universe is not nearly so crazy as some of the people in it."

SOCIOLOGY

Johnson, Alvin: THE "NOUVEAU RICHE" AND CULTURE. *Commentary*, October, 1953.

The author, who is, among other things, the Editor of the *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, dismantles the theory that "new money" vulgarizes culture and that civilization is dependent on aristocratic wealth for the advancement of creative thought, art, and literature. History, from the days of Pericles' Athens and the Rome of Scipio and Augustus, to Renaissance Italy and contemporary America, amply demonstrates, according to Johnson, that "creative culture . . . blooms in a period of rapidly expanding economy" but only under one condition, that there be freedom.

Petersen, William: IS AMERICA STILL THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY? WHAT RECENT STUDIES SHOW ABOUT SOCIAL MOBILITY. *Commentary*, November, 1953.

Popular cliché has it that it is harder nowadays for a young man to get ahead in the U.S.A. than it was, say, fifty or seventy-five years ago. Weighing all the factors that make for a more "static" society—e.g., the "closing of the frontier," the limitation of immigration, etc.—and counterweighing them with the factors that make for greater mobility, Mr. Petersen comes to the conclusion, well documented with facts and figures, that there has been no basic change. The U.S.A. is still a country of great social mobility, in which the highest "stratum" is regularly recruited from the rest of society.

Polanyi, Michael: SOCIAL ILLUSIONS. *The New Leader*, November 16, 1953.

The thought of Adam Smith and Jefferson and Jean-Baptiste Say entailed social illusions no less consequential than those of Karl Marx and Bakunin and Nechayev. Professor Polanyi traces the history of those illusions—continued in the theories of more recent economists—during the past hundred years, and especially during the period from the Great Depression of 1929 to our own day. He comes, however, to the rather optimistic conclusion that "looking back today on the social passions and illusions of the past forty years, I can see on the whole a marked decrease in their intensity, which may save us from pursuing these fallacies to the bitter end."

THEATER

Laurents, Arthur: THE TIME OF THE CUCKOO. *Theatre Arts*, November, 1953.

The success story and the complete text of a broadway hit, which analyzes an American abroad by showing how the forces which have shaped his character at home come into conflict with the mores of the Old World.

ADDRESSES

The American Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Virginia ($1.00 per copy)

Art News, 654 Madison Avenue, New York 21, New York ($0.50 per copy)

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Foreign Affairs, 58 East 68th Street, New York 21, New York ($1.50 per copy)

Harper's Magazine, 49 East 33rd Street, New York 16, New York ($0.50 per copy)

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The Sewanee Review, University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee ($1.00 per copy)

The South Atlantic Quarterly, Duke University Press, Box 6697, College Station, Durham, North Carolina ($0.75 per copy)

Theatre Arts, 130 West 56th Street, New York 19, New York ($0.50 per copy)

The Yale Review, Drawer 1729, New Haven 7, Connecticut ($1.00 per copy)

NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

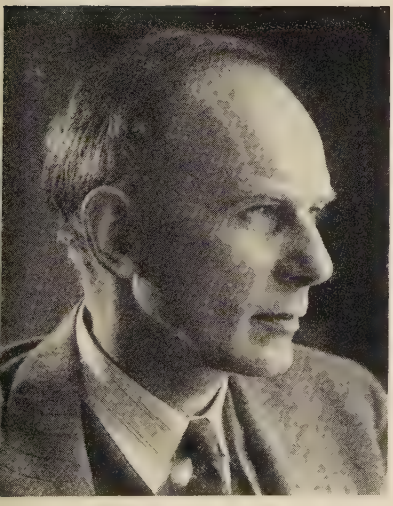
GEORGE BOAS was born in August, 1891, in Providence, Rhode Island, and educated there at Brown University. He has for many years been Professor of Philosophy at the University of California. Among his books are *Major Traditions of European Philosophy* (1929) and *A Primer for Critics* (1937). Professor Boas has made significant contributions to aesthetics, to criticism, and to the general history of ideas, and exemplifies in the style as well as in the substance of his writing the temper and the education of a humanist.

RUDOLPH DE HARAK, the cover artist for this issue of *Perspectives*, was born in Culver City, California, in 1924. At twenty-two he was already established as an art director and consulting designer in Los Angeles. In 1950 he came to New York City where he was promotion art director for the magazine *Seventeen* for two years. At present he is a free-lance designer and photographer, and also teaches advertising design at Cooper Union. His work has been exhibited at The Museum of Modern Art and appeared in the magazines *Graphis Annual* and *Interiors*. For Mr. de Harak graphic design is more than work; it is specifically a creative occupation embracing life itself; it is a contemporary means of communicating innermost experiences and responses.

F. W. DUPEE was born in Chicago in 1904. He taught English at Bowdoin College during the 'twenties, but spent the next decade as a traveler, free-lance writer, and editor. In 1937 he joined the staff of *Partisan Review*, one of the leading American *avant-garde* literary magazines. His published criticism has been largely devoted to Henry James; in 1946 he edited the critical anthology

IRWIN EDMAN
Robert Christie

PETER QUENNELL
Angus McBean



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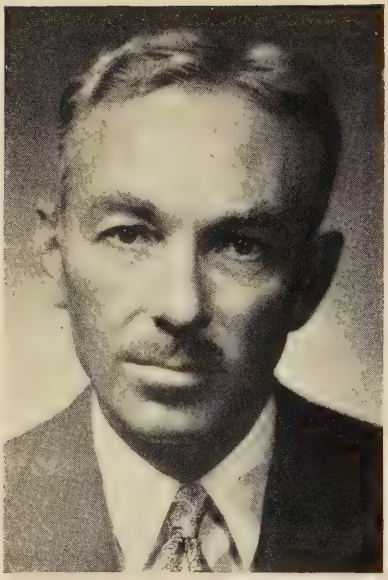

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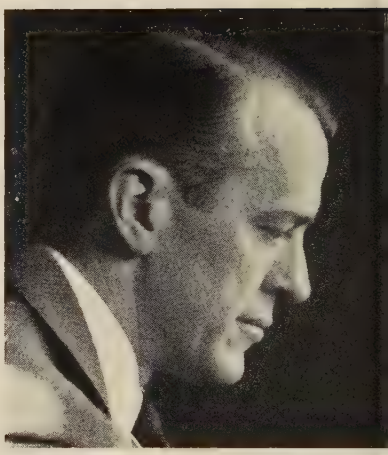

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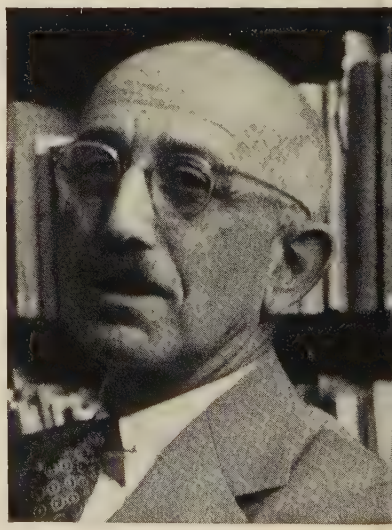

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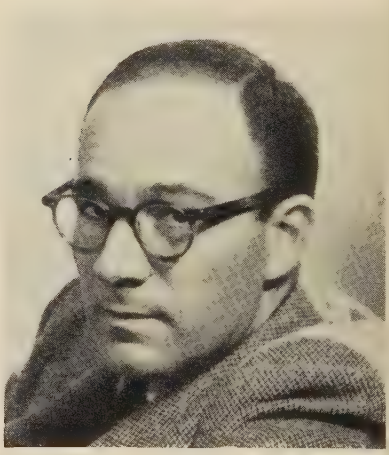

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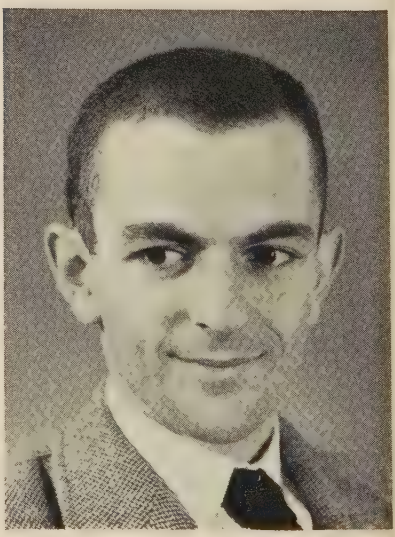

DANIEL G. HOFFMAN
Rollie McKenna

The Question of Henry James, and in 1951 he published *Henry James*, a volume in the American Men of Letters Series. In 1953 he lived in Paris, working on a series of critical portraits of modern writers, studies in which he combines critical and biographical techniques. At present he is living in New York City, where he is an Associate Professor of English at Columbia University.

IRWIN EDMAN, the guest editor of this issue of *Perspectives*, was born in New York City in 1896. He received both his B.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University where since 1918 he has been a teacher in the Department of Philosophy, starting first as lecturer and becoming full professor in 1935. Dr. Edman, who considers himself "an empiricist homesick for Platonism," has been a major cultural force in communicating serious philosophical ideas to the literate American public without either simplifying or vulgarizing their content. His important books in this field—he has published since 1920—are *The Contemporary and His Soul* (1932), *The Mind of Paul* (1935), *Four Ways of Philosophy* (1937), *Philosopher's Holiday* (1938) [Constable], *Candle in the Dark* (1939) [Cape], *Arts and the Man* (1939), and *Philosopher's Quest* (1947) [Macmillan]. Aside from his activities as teacher and lecturer in both American and foreign universities, he has contributed articles to the more important cultural magazines in this country and is a member of the editorial board of *The American Scholar*. His special field of professional interest is aesthetics and he is engaged on a work to be called *The Philosophy of Criticism*. At present he holds the Johnsonian Professorship of Philosophy at Columbia University.

JAMES THOMAS FLEXNER was born in New York City in 1908 and received his degree from Harvard University in 1929. After graduation he was a reporter for two years on the *New York Herald Tribune*. Since that time Mr. Flexner has devoted himself to the writing of books —histories and biographies—which have explored the various aspects of American national life, with special attention to those cultural forces that have created modern America. His first published work was *Doctors on Horseback: Pioneers of American Medicine* (1937). This was followed by *America's Old Masters* (1939); *William Henry Welch and the Heroic Age of American Medicine* (1941); *Steamboats Come True: American Inventors in Action* (1944); *John Singleton Copley* (1948); *Short History of American Painting* (1950); and *The Traitor and the Spy: Benedict Arnold and John André* (1953). At present he is writing under a Guggenheim grant a second volume to *American Painting: First Flowers of Our Wilderness* (1947), which is scheduled for publication in 1955.

JOHN GASSNER was born in 1903 and educated in New York City and abroad, receiving his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Columbia University. Termed by *Commonweal* magazine "the foremost authority on the history of drama in America," he has been critic, author, anthologist, motion picture executive, and Chairman of the Play Department of the Theatre Guild during its most

creative period in the 'thirties. Of his more than fifteen published books, the most important are *Masters of the Drama* (1940), *Producing the Play* (1942) and the soon-to-be-published *Theatre in Our Times*; he has also edited *A Treasury of the Theatre* (1951) and the four-volume *Best Plays of the American Theatre* (1939–49). Mr. Gassner, who is Senior Contributing Editor of *Theatre Arts* magazine and a member of the New York Drama Critics Circle, has contributed many articles on drama criticism to leading magazines and encyclopaedias both here and abroad. At present he is Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Queens College, in Flushing, New York, and Lecturer in Dramatic Arts in the School of Drama at Columbia University.

DANIEL G. HOFFMAN'S three poems in *Perspectives* are from (and include the title poem of) his book, *An Armada of Thirty Whales*, published in March by Yale University Press. This book was selected by W. H. Auden as the 1954 volume in the Yale Series of Younger Poets competition. Mr. Hoffman's poetic intentions have been well described by Mr. Auden in his introduction to Mr. Hoffman's book: "While admitting the pains and tragedies of life, he can find joy in life and say so. Nor . . . does he try to pretend to a Wordsworthian intimacy with Nature. He knows that for any member of our urban culture, such intensity is not given but is a prize slowly and patiently to be won." Mr. Hoffman has written articles and reviews on American literature and a critical study of *Paul Bunyan, Last of the Frontier Demigods* (1952). This volume is also available in Europe through the Oxford University Press. Mr. Hoffman is now at work on a study of Stephen Crane and an extension of Constance Rourke's approach to American literature, exploring more fully the influence upon it of folk traditions. He is an Instructor in English at Columbia University.

CLYDE KLUCKHOHN was born in Le Mars, Iowa, in 1905. He received his A.B. from the University of Wisconsin in 1928, his M.A. from Oxford as a Rhodes scholar, and his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1936. At present he is Professor of Anthropology at Harvard and, in addition, since 1947 has been Director of the Russian Research Center there. In commenting on his credo as both teacher and author, Mr. Kluckhohn has written: "The major conception which has, I believe, been persistent in my work is that of the need to study man simultaneously on the natural science, humanistic, and social science levels. In other words, I believe in general anthropology and in the unity of anthropology as a total subject. This implies also that anthropologists must be concerned equally with the differences and the similarities (both biological and cultural) to be found among and between human groups." Among his more recent books are: *Children of the People*, written in collaboration with Dr. Dorothea Leighton (1947); *Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture*, edited with Dr. Henry A. Murray (1948) [Cape]; *Mirror for Man* (1949) [Harrap], and *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, written with A. L. Kroeber (1952).

LOUIS KRONENBERGER was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in December, 1904. He is the drama critic of *Time Magazine* and has a wide reputation as both a literary critic and a social historian, particularly of the eighteenth century. His book on that epoch, *Kings and Desperate Men* (1942) [Gollancz], is a brilliant, succinct literary portrait. He has also written a book on comedy in English drama called *The Thread of Laughter* (1952). This spring he is publishing a book which does for the contemporary American scene, though with greater good will and good humor, what Mrs. Trollope did over a century ago in her *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. This forthcoming volume is entitled *Company Manners*, and it is from this book that Mr. Kronenberger's essay in this issue of *Perspectives* is drawn. Mr. Kronenberger is a contributor of frequent critical essays and reviews to *The New York Times* and other publications.

WILLIAM MAXWELL was born in 1908 in Lincoln, Illinois. He had his early schooling in that State and attended the University of Illinois, where he taught English briefly. He took his M.A. degree in English at Harvard University. For nearly twenty years he has been one of the editors of *The New Yorker*. As a novelist he is widely known for a delicate and subtle study of adolescence entitled *The Folded Leaf* (1945) [Faber], which has appeared in translation in several European languages. He earlier wrote a novel entitled *They Came Like Swallows* (1937), and subsequently a study of a family in the relatively peaceful world of 1912 living in a small town in Illinois; it was called *Time Will Darken It* (1948) [Faber] and received wide critical appreciation. Mr. Maxwell has also written short stories, one of which appears in this issue.

HOWARD MOSS was born in New York in 1922 and educated at the Universities of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Harvard. He taught English at Vassar College from 1944 to 1946, and before and since that time he has had such occupations as fiction editor, book reviewer for *Time Magazine*, and writer for the Office of War Information. For the past six years he has been on the editorial staff of *The New Yorker*. His published work consists of two books of poetry: *The Wound and the Weather* (1946) and *The Toy Fair*, to be published this year. Mr. Moss states that he has no theories nor principles by which he works, but that his poems are formal and attempt to be musical. In recognition of his talent he was awarded in 1944 the Janet Sewall Davis prize by *Poetry Magazine*. Mr. Moss has contributed reviews and critical articles to such magazines as *Poetry*, *The Kenyon Review*, the literary section of *The New York Times* and similar periodicals.

ERNEST NAGEL, Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University, is one of America's leading scholars and philosophers in the fields of logic, scientific method, and the philosophy of science. He is an editor of the *Journal of Philosophy*. A number of his notable contributions to the philosophical journals are appearing this spring in a volume entitled *Sovereign Reason and Other Studies in the Philosophy of Science*. Professor Nagel's work has been

widely appreciated both for its technical contributions and for the illumination his inquiries shed on general human issues as they are affected by scientific method and a philosophy of science.

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER was born in Indian Creek, Texas, in 1894. At nineteen she began to travel, and eventually settled, in 1919, in New York, where she was a journalist and a free-lance writer. Three years later she was appointed by President Obregón of Mexico as American organizer of the first show of that country's arts to be sent abroad. During this period she began to write and to publish her first stories, which were subsequently collected under the title of *Flowering Judas* (1930). Shortly afterward she received a Guggenheim Fellowship and traveled about Europe, making her headquarters in Paris for a number of years. Returning to America, she published a collection of three short novels, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* (1939), followed by *The Leaning Tower and Other Stories* (1944), and *The Days Before* (1952), a collection of personal essays. At present she is teaching in the English Department at the University of Michigan and has in progress a novel whose title is *No Safe Harbor*.

PETER QUENNELL was born in Kent, England, in March 1905, and educated at Balliol College, Oxford. He is one of the influential and arresting voices in contemporary literary criticism in England. He has been a distinguished contributor to the recent reinterpretation of Byron; his two books, *Byron, The Years of Fame* (1935) and *Byron in Italy* (1941), have been outstanding. He is also the author of *Caroline of England* (1940) [Collins] and *Four Portraits* (1945) [Collins] and an evocative book, half travel and half historical essay, called *Spring in Sicily* (1952) [*Weidenfeld and Nicolson*]. He has made significant historical contributions in the editing of *Private Letters of Princess Lieven to Prince Metternich* (1948) [Murray] and *Byron, A Self Portrait: Letters and Diaries, 1798–1824* (1950). Mr. Quennell is the editor of the English quarterly *History Today*. A sharp and knowledgeable critic, he has always been free from modish jargon.

FRANCIS STEEGMULLER was born in 1906 in New Haven, Connecticut, and took both his B.A. and M.A. degrees at Columbia University. He is that increasingly rare phenomenon, a man of letters whose whole adult life has been primarily and almost exclusively devoted to writing. At the age of twenty, while still an undergraduate, he wrote a striking novel, *O Rare Ben Jonson* (1927). He has since written both fiction and biography, but kept the two strictly apart. His *Flaubert and Madame Bovary* (1938) has become a standard work and, besides being an admirable biography, is a distinctive contribution to the issues in art and literature brought to focus by Flaubert's departure from romanticism. Mr. Steegmuller has published *Selected Letters of Gustave Flaubert* (1954) [Hamish Hamilton], all of them translated by him, and most of them never before translated. These, with the author's brief, pointed, introductory essay, throw new light on Flaubert's philosophy of art as society, and on a whole

set of authentic and moral issues of his time and our own. Mr. Steegmuller has in addition written *The Two Lives of James Jackson Jarves* (1951), the biography of an American businessman turned art collector and art educator of his fellow countrymen. *States of Grace* (1946), a novel of manners and of wit, is that contemporary rarity, an artistically serious light novel. The author is also a contributor to *The New Yorker* and *Partisan Review*, and has written critical articles for *The New York Times*.

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK was born in Far Rockaway, Long Island, in 1886. After graduation from Harvard University in 1908, he spent three years doing postgraduate work in comparative philology at the University of Göttingen and at the University of Berlin. Since 1911 he has worked in an editorial capacity in the publishing house of Charles Scribner's Sons. Mr. Wheelock first began publishing his poetry in 1905, and since that time his most important books have been *The Black Panther* (1922), *The Bright Doom* (1927), and *Collected Poems* (1936); he also selected and edited, with an introduction, *The Face of a Nation, Poetical Passages from the Writings of Thomas Wolfe* (1939), and *Editor to Author, the Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins* (1950). Of his work, the author has written: "Poetry is revelation. In poetry, the aural appeals to me more than the visual; lyric poetry more than any other; and, within that category, the incantatory, the magical, the spell of sheer sorcery, rather than the argumentative, the expository, or the analytical."

E. B. WHITE was born in Mt. Vernon, New York, in 1899, and educated at Cornell University. Now well known to a large public, he was for years semi-anonymously familiar to a great many readers of the unsigned first page of *The New Yorker* of which he was frequently the author—a page of commentary and reflections which has become a national institution. He is an essayist of rare quality with a style that is a unique blend of familiarity and distinction. His selected writings, *The Second Tree from the Corner* (1954) [Hamish Hamilton], has been widely acclaimed. An earlier collection, *One Man's Meat* (1944), is often used in American schools and colleges as an example of excellence in contemporary writing. He has written two books for children, *Stuart Little* (1945), and *Charlotte's Web* (1952), which have within a very short time become established in their field. Elwyn Brooks White has been an editor of *The New Yorker* almost from the beginning of the publication of that weekly over twenty-five years ago.

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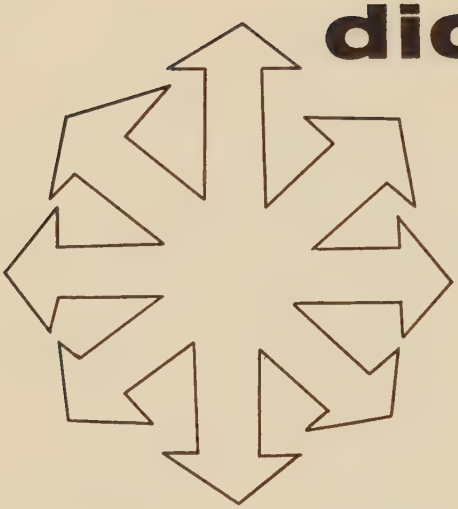

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